

Monatshefte

FÜR DEUTSCHEN UNTERRICHT,
DEUTSCHE SPRACHE UND LITERATUR

Volume LI

December, 1959

Number 7

TWO UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF THOMAS MANN *

I.

THOMAS MANN

1550 SAN REMO DRIVE
PACIFIC PALISADES, CALIFORNIA

May 4, 1951

Dr. Kenneth Oliver
Occidental College
Los Angeles 41, California

Dear Dr. Oliver:

It is difficult to find words to describe the pleasure your kind letter gave me. To learn that, under the guidance of a distinguished teacher, young American students of literature are occupying themselves so thoroughly with my life's work could only give me great joy and satisfaction. I congratulate myself, and I also congratulate your pupils — namely on their receptiveness and their enthusiasm — quite apart from its incidental object. Admiration, quite generally, is our greatest asset, a wonderful gift, the prerequisite of all our growth and development. Where would I be today if it hadn't been for my ability to admire, to look up to that which is high above me, and to view the good, the great and the masterly with amazement and discernment? We only learn through admiration.

I am moved to hear that this group of young people desires a personal contact with me and expects possible furtherance of their studies and insights through a conversation with me. Believe me, I deeply regret having to disappoint you in this respect. But I am an old man whose health is no longer very steady, and who is profoundly disturbed by the perniciously tense and disaster-laden atmosphere in which we are breathing today. Nervous and tired, I live very secluded, occupied only with my work and shy with regard to "social" obligations and discussion, especially as I do not muster the English language sufficiently for me to be able to express myself freely and adequately on complicated subjects — and that is what we are concerned with. My pleasure at such a get-together would be mixed with too much effort and shortcoming, and

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for you and your group it would be a disappointment. It is better, therefore, to give up this idea.

If during the planned studies of my writings some questions should arise which you should like to have answered by the author himself, I will be very glad to do so to the best of my ability by letter.

I have no very clear picture of how my books present themselves in the English translation in which your pupils have to read them by necessity. Doubtlessly, Mrs. Lowe-Porter has accomplished all that is humanly possible, but she herself is most fully aware of the existing difficulties which my German style puts in the way of a translation into another language, and while working on her English version of "Lotte in Weimar" ("The Beloved Returns" — a title entirely unnatural to me!), she once said to me, almost with contrition: "I am committing a murder!" She was certainly too harsh with herself, and I am reporting her utterance only because it is important to me that you and the young friends of my work realize that you are dealing with a shadow, a reflection, not really with the object itself. The translation communicates my ideas, more or less, but what is an idea deprived of its native form? In art, content and form are too much one and the same to permit the content to remain entirely unchanged when lifted from its primary form and poured into another.

A translation, though in itself a great achievement, may arouse quite erroneous impressions about the spirit of the original. For instance, I have occasionally heard the American critics call my style "Olympian", "pompous" and "ponderous" — and at first would not trust my ears at these characterizations. None of these attributes are in the least pertinent, believe me! Complete lucidity, musicality, and a serenity which lightens what might be heavy, — this is what my prose has always tried to achieve. In addition to that, I admit, there is a playful tendency towards irony and subtle parody upon tradition. It is especially these elements which are jeopardized by the translation and may cause my English style to appear stilted.

Please excuse these remarks which I hope do not seem pretentious. They are only meant to show you how eager I am for your students to regard my novels in the proper light and perhaps to offer a kind of compensation for the personal interview.

With my best wishes for your seminar, I remain, dear Dr. Oliver,

Sincerely yours
Thomas Mann

II.

THOMAS MANN

1550 SAN REMO DRIVE
PACIFIC PALISADES, CALIFORNIA

October 12, 1951

Professor Kenneth Oliver
Occidental College
Los Angeles 41, California

Dear Professor Oliver:

I am ashamed for thanking you only today for your letter of July 12th. It reached me in Europe, from where I have just returned, but at the time I was unable to answer it due to frequent changes of residence and a mineral-water cure which I took at Bad Gastein, Austria.

Now that I am back, the waters of my European and American correspondence reach up to my chin, and to reply to each individual letter properly is almost impossible. Let me say only this:

You will find various scattered references to what I called the new, or third, humanism in my essays. What I had in mind was a new approach, born of suffering, to the idea of man, to the mystery of this species, at home in two worlds, the spiritual and the natural, for whom, because of this, life is much more difficult than for any other creature. It is the actual experience of this mysterious difficulty which might lead to a new feeling of sympathy with and awe of human existence, a sympathy which might bridge the seemingly unbridgeable gulf of contrast and hostility mentioned in your letter. I cannot and will not venture into the political realm now. But I am convinced that peace is the great commandment of the world hour, and that another war would destroy all hopes one might have for humanity for an incalculable period of time. If I have occasionally participated in the so-called peace propaganda, I did so not out of fondness for Russian totalitarianism from which I have recently explicitly distanced myself in a lecture entitled "The Days of My Life". That I could have been accused of communistic leanings can only be explained by the understandable nervousness prevalent in this country today, which is largely the product of a propaganda that is not always carried out with a sufficient sense of responsibility. When I speak for peace, I do not speak for Russia and Stalinism, but for humanity whose destiny has remained close to my heart up to the late years of my life.

Please be content with these few and insufficient words, and let me thank you most warmly for attaching importance to my thoughts and my endeavours.

With best wishes and regards,

Very sincerely yours
Thomas Mann

WOLFGANG BORCHERT: "DRAUSSEN VOR DER TÜR":
A Young Poet's Struggle with Guilt and Despair

JOSEPH MILECK
University of California

Und erzähl deinen Kindern nie von dem heiligen Krieg:
Sag die Wahrheit, sag sie so rot wie sie ist: voll Blut
und Mündungsfeuer und Geschrei (*Das ist unser Manifest*).

This was Wolfgang Borchert's final and most earnest appeal to his generation of Germans. A more appropriate motto for his writings could hardly be found. Borchert had had his fill of lies and inhumanity, and in the short period following the Second World War and before his untimely death, he was intent only upon truth: upon portraying the human condition within the framework of war and its aftermath. It was inevitable that he would become preoccupied with guilt and would have to grapple with despair.

Wolfgang Borchert was born in Hamburg on May 20, 1921. In 1938 he left the *Unterprima* of the *Oberschule* to become an apprentice book-dealer. In March, 1941, he accepted his first engagement as an actor in Lüneburg. Shortly thereafter he was conscripted. While Borchert was still stationed in Germany and was still under the surveillance of the Gestapo for an earlier misdemeanor, a number of letters in which he was frankly critical of the state fell into the hands of the police. However, before he could be taken into custody he had already been shipped to the Russian front in the winter of 1941. In February, 1942, Borchert was wounded. In May, 1942, he was removed from a field hospital, and though suffering from jaundice and diphtheria, was imprisoned in Nürnberg. A subsequent death sentence was commuted because of his youth, and after six months in prison, he was returned to the Russian front on probation. Rendered useless as a soldier by recurrent attacks of high fever, Borchert was sent back to Germany, where he was again arrested, in 1943, for indulging in a few political jokes at the expense of the Nazis. In the spring of 1945, after nine more months of imprisonment in Berlin, Borchert was returned to the front in southwestern Germany. Soon thereafter he was captured by the Americans in Frankfurt am Main. He was released almost immediately, and promptly set out on foot for Hamburg.

Borchert was bedridden and almost constantly in acute pain during most of the two-and-a-half years he was still to live. He returned briefly to the theater as an assistant stage-manager and even undertook to perform in a cabaret. Most of his time and rapidly waning strength, however, were devoted to his writing. In September, 1947, Borchert was sent to a sanitarium in Basel. He died here on November 20, 1947.

Borchert left behind only one slim volume and a great deal of prom-

ise.¹ Of the twenty-nine poems in his collected works, fourteen first appeared in 1946 under the title, *Laterne, Nacht und Sterne*; the others were selected from his *Nachlaß*. All of these poems were written between 1940 and 1945. Borchert's most representative poetic form is a three-quatrain poem. Decided preference is given to the iamb, though the more forceful trochee occurs quite frequently. Tetrameter lines are more prevalent than trimeters and pentameters, and of diverse rhyme schemes, the alternate prevails. An unevenness and an unfinished quality characterize these poems. They range from poetry which is folksong-like in its lyricism and in its simplicity and regularity of form, to rhythmic prose verging upon interior monologue. Borchert's language is too commonplace upon occasion, jarring impure rhymes are not infrequent, and unexpected and purposeless irregularity in the number of feet per line in an otherwise very regular poem suggests careless haste.

Fog-enveloped Hamburg with its lonely wind and rain swept streets furnishes the background for most of Borchert's poems. The atmosphere is heavy with fatigue and melancholy and pervaded by a gentle, hesitant longing. Night and death are Borchert's leitmotifs, and his favorite color is a dismal grey. However, there is still life and hope in this sepulchral setting: the wail of a ship's siren quickens the pulse-beat; the occasional glimmer of lively reds and greens is full of tension and expectancy; and there is always a lamp to penetrate the darkness.

It was not until after the war that Borchert turned his attention to prose. He now began, as though possessed, to record postwar situations and to snatch battlefield incidents from his memory. Thirty-nine of these prose passages are included in the *Gesamtwerk*, and only five of them are more than ten pages in length. Twelve of them were written in 1946 and were published as *Die Hundeblume* in the summer of 1947. Nineteen others which had been completed between the autumn of 1946 and the summer of 1947 appeared as *An diesem Dienstag*, shortly after Borchert's death. The last eight items were selected from Borchert's *Nachlaß*.

Many of these prose passages are literary snapshots. A few assume the form of the short story. Some are only brief reflections, and others are disputations, invocations, exhortations, and manifestos. Many of the passages are almost completely in dialogue. Some are strongly rhetorical. A few approach free verse in their poetic quality, and one in particular is an excellent example of the stream of consciousness technique. All of these items are nervous outbursts marked by an unusual degree of intensity, immediacy, and urgency, and characterized by a staccato movement of telegraphic sentences, by very impressionable word accumulations, and by chant-like repetitions.

In most of these prose passages, whether on the Russian front or in

¹ *Das Gesamtwerk* (Hamburg, 1949), 420 pp. The most recent edition was published in 1958 (375 pp.).

the streets of Hamburg, Borchert is primarily concerned with the victims of life: the *Ausgelieferten*, *Verlorenen*, *Belogenen*, and the *Getretenen*. His intimidated and trammelled bits of humanity cower in their slit-trenches, numbed by terror, bewilderment, and by cold. They crouch on moldy cellar steps, linger away in prisons and in attics, fill the park benches, sit on the cold parapets of bridges, and lounge about the stinking canals and harbors. All are pale and lonely, hungry and homesick, and all are waiting, just waiting. The melancholy, the hesitant longing, and the hope of Borchert's poems have become gloom, smoldering anger, and growing despair. The occasional feverish acclaim of life, desperate shout of hope, or timid suggestion of faith ring suspiciously hollow. It is only in the prose of his *Nachlaß*, that Borchert is finally able to break this spell of despair. His last works evidence a new vitality, and the signs of a new faith and of new hope are unmistakable.

Draußen vor der Tür marks the crucial point in Borchert's struggle with despair. This, his only drama, was written in a frenzied period of eight days, late in the autumn of 1946. It was first produced as a radio play on February 13, 1947, and enjoyed a successful première in Hamburg, on November 21, one day after Borchert's death. The play was published at the end of 1947, and since then it has been an important item in the repertoire of most of Germany's best theaters. Why this dramatic diatribe should have had this immediate and extended fascination for the Germans is difficult to determine. In the privation it depicts and in its self-pity, anger, and despair, the play obviously mirrored the lot and sentiment of Borchert's generation in the immediate postwar period. Borchert could readily become a spokesman for this "lost generation."² But, that the population at large should have found the play's acrid indictments palatable, is hard to understand.³ Borchert's appended motto suggests that he himself had entertained no fond hopes: "Ein Stück, das kein Theater spielen und kein Publikum sehen will."

Sergeant Beckmann has returned to Germany after three years as a prisoner of war in Siberia. He has come home, however, only to find someone else wearing his clothes, sleeping in his bed, and beside his wife. The door closes, and Beckmann stands outside, cold, hungry, and exhausted. In his humiliation and despair, he attempts suicide. But the irate Elbe only washes him back ashore. She will have no part of his wretched morsel of life. The few moments of new hope and of refuge

² For the general enthusiastic reception which Borchert enjoyed in Germany see: "Ein Heimkehrer sucht Deutschland," *Sonntag* (Berlin), 3, No. 16 (1948), 7; Hans Weigel, "Die große Tragödie," *Komödie* (Wien), 2, No. 6 (1947-48); H. Burghardt, "Wolfgang Borchert und das Erleben menschlicher Verlassenheit," *Literarische Revue*, 4 (1949), 250-253; Bernhard Meyer-Marwitz, "Wolfgang Borchert," Borchert's *Das Gesamtwerk* (1958), pp. 351-375.

³ Of course not all of Borchert's countrymen were favorably impressed by him. For the few who caustically rejected his works see: K. Ch. Harpprecht, "Gibt denn keiner Antwort," *Zeitwende*, 20 (1948-49), 71-73; Fritz Erpenbeck, *Lebendiges Theater* (Berlin, 1949), pp. 286-288; Heinz Rein, *Die neue Literatur* (Berlin, 1950), p. 347.

which *das Mädchen* affords Beckmann end abruptly upon the unexpected return from Russia of her husband, the one-legged corporal who owes his misfortune to Sergeant Beckmann. Torn by guilt and more despair, Beckmann flees into the darkness, again intent upon death. The old colonel, to whose home Beckmann now rushes, frantically anxious to return all responsibility for the deaths of eleven of the twenty men placed under his command at Gorodok, is slightly startled, then amused by Beckmann's antics, and finally laughs him back out into the darkness. Only the rum stolen from the colonel's well-laden table can now provide Beckmann any solace. The director of a cabaret to whom Beckmann next appeals for a job mouths the noblest of sentiments, never unmindful however, of the public and the box office, and then sends distraught Beckmann on his way again, with the admonition that truth will get him nowhere. Beckmann's parents are his last hope. But they have committed suicide, and Frau Kramer, who now lives in their apartment, cannot forget that she could have done a month's cooking with the gas they wasted on themselves. Beckmann is at the end of his tether. After a Kafkaesque nightmare of three days, he teeters on the brink of abysmal despair.

The society to which Beckmann returns has closed its doors to him. All whom he encounters, with the exception of *das Mädchen*, are inextricably incased in themselves. A shocking inhumanity prevails. Human beings suffer and are ignored, die and are immediately forgotten. Expediency has replaced morality, and the unscrupulous flourish. Neither the colonel nor the director has any compunction about the war just ended. For both of them, it has already become little more than an incidental recollection. Nor does either have any real conception of truth. For the colonel, truth is something peculiarly German, something associated with Clausewitz. And for the director, truth is something essentially unprofitable, and therefore quite dispensable. Beckmann is casually dismissed as a dunderhead, a novice in life, a truth fanatic, a troublesome pacifist, a clown, and just another one of those peculiar candidates for suicide. Frau Kramer's reception of Beckmann is just as callous.

Each of these three representatives of society is self-complacent, and each is indifferent to Beckmann's plight. Not one of them can or will comprehend Beckmann's anguish, and all are incapable of compassion. They are blind or have deliberately blinded themselves to responsibility and to the consequences of their actions, and each managed to stifle his conscience. Survival at any price seems to have become the order of the day.

In this general indictment of postwar German society Beckmann himself seems to fare right well. He is the underdog, and as such, he may win our sympathy almost as quickly as he won the acclaim of those of Borchert's generation who fervently identified themselves with Beckmann. But is Beckmann the innocent victim or the paragon that Borchert

enthusiasts would have him be? Is he, in fact, an anomaly in his world?

The self-complacency which confronts Beckmann on almost all sides is most reprehensible. But is Beckmann's self-righteousness any more commendable? Beckmann is not inhuman like the colonel, the director, or Frau Kramer, but he is certainly just as inordinately self-centered. An appalling disinterest characterizes society's reaction to Beckmann. But is he himself particularly solicitous of the welfare of those whom he encounters? He is just as contemptuous of the colonel, the director, and of Frau Kramer as they are indifferent to him, and while *das Mädchen* appreciates his plight, he remains quite oblivious of hers.

Beckmann is obviously too self-engrossed even to be aware of, let alone to be concerned about, or to try to understand the predicament of others. He is, to be sure, agitated as no one else in the drama is, but his agitation is primarily that of abhorrence, and is quite devoid of compassion. The sympathy of *das Mädchen* only stirs his ready suspicion and rouses his sexual interest. The colonel takes no pity on Beckmann, but Sergeant Beckmann takes just as little pity on his maimed corporal. Beckmann is simply too vindictive to be humane. He derides the colonel, and reminds him maliciously of the hundreds of deaths that must weigh upon his conscience. He taunts the director, baits Frau Kramer, and caustically accuses all three of murdering him. Nor does God escape this invective. Beckmann reviles Him for his indifference to man's lot, ridicules Him for his impotence, and consigns the lachrymose, doddering old theologian to the limbo of spent deities.

Beckmann is decidedly more intent on accusing than on commiserating. He is so fascinated by the mote in his brother's eye, that he fails to consider the beam in his own. He has, in fact, blinded himself almost as effectively as those whose irresponsible blindness he disparages. The director's stylish horn-rimmed glasses are meant to impress people and not to improve his vision. Beckmann's ludicrous gas mask glasses limit his range of vision to the atrocities and horrors of life. In neither case do these glasses afford better perspective, and in both cases they represent a deliberate, self-inflicted blindness, an attitude based on expediency. They blind the director to the agony of his fellow humans and to his moral responsibility and assure him an income. They blind Beckmann to himself and his guilt and assure him some respite from his troubled conscience. Without his glasses Beckmann is almost overwhelmed by fear and anxiety. When *das Mädchen* suddenly deprives him of these blinders, he is immediately troubled and recoils in guilt before his vision of his mutilated corporal. And it is while asleep and not peering through his glasses that Beckmann is reduced to hysterics by his feeling of guilt. Beckmann and the director are equally dependent upon their glasses. In both cases these glasses represent an attitude of escape, and neither is willing to relinquish his.

Much to Beckmann's consternation, almost every person he meets

is bent on forgetting. No one really remembers the war, and almost everyone quickly forgets Beckmann. But is Beckmann an exception in this tendency which he is ever ready to decry? He himself remembers the horrors of the war most vividly but hardly deliberately. He has simply not been as successful as the others in his persistent efforts to blot out these memories. The colonel and the director are indeed shamefully quick to dismiss Beckmann from their minds. But Beckmann forgets the man whose place he usurps and whose death he causes just as quickly. The colonel does not remember Beckmann and the twenty men detailed to reconnoiter the forest about Gorodok, and, when reminded of this incident, he refuses to acknowledge any responsibility for the consequent casualties. Beckmann remembers Gorodok right well, but he is anxious at the same time to rid himself of his own responsibility in order that he too may forget.

No, Beckmann is certainly just as intent upon escaping life's unpleasantnesses as everyone else is. Because his conscience bothers him he wants to shed his name and to assume another identity. Because his pride is stung he leaps into the Elbe. And because awareness is too painful he tries to drink himself insensible. His answer to adversity is sleep and oblivion. Even Beckmann's frenetic censure of society represents a type of escape, for his preoccupation with the sins of his fellow man diverts his attention from his own shortcomings.

Beckmann is possessed by self-pity because life has dealt harshly with him. He is embittered because society does not accord him the reception he anticipated. He envies the very people whom he condemns. He protests too loudly and too long, and his sarcasm never abates. Of course, Beckmann is not the unscrupulous person that the director is. Nor is he morally blind, like the colonel. These are to be despised. Beckmann is only to be pitied. In his own way, however, Beckmann is just as culpable as the colonel, the director, or Frau Kramer. Unlike these, he is acutely aware of right and wrong, and is troubled by society's disregard for truth. And although he is blind to his own faults, he is deeply disturbed by the inhumanity of his fellow men. Nevertheless, Beckmann is as incapable as everyone else of transcending himself and the immediate circumstances of life. *Bein, Bett, and Brot* are his litany, and except for a moment or so at the very end of the drama, his agony is primarily a personal, psycho-physical one. Only when it finally dawns upon Beckmann that he, like every other human, commits a murder every day and is himself murdered daily, does this psycho-physical agony appear to become metaphysical anguish. But Beckmann is no more prepared to cope with life than he had been to cope with society. He had just previously attributed all his woes to the colonels, the directors, and the Frau Kramers of society. Now he shouts that life too has betrayed him.

Beckmann will not or cannot come to terms with himself, with

society, or with life. As the curtain falls, he stands distraught and apparently on the brink of absolute despair, wondering petulantly why God has forsaken him. Has Beckmann changed at all? He is obviously quite perturbed, but he has always been so, and he has now, if anything, become less remorseful for his contribution to man's inhumanity to man. Furthermore, the theory of existential guilt he suddenly expounds is strongly suggestive of yet another adroit circumvention of personal guilt. And does Beckmann actually experience his new insight into the nature of life, and does this insight really threaten to engulf him in despair? Or is this the same old Beckmann merely indulging in new theatrics?

In either case, Beckmann represents a dead-end street. He is a fraud, a hopeless case, or a bit of both. It is inconceivable that the author intended his Beckmann to be the laudable victim-hero that he has been for Borchert enthusiasts. Beckmann indicts society in no uncertain terms. Borchert's more subtle indictment of Beckmann is just as unequivocal. German society is called to account, and no one is spared. Borchert must surely have had this in mind when he added his motto: "Ein Stück, das kein Theater spielen und kein Publikum sehen will." Nor was Borchert sparing himself. With *Draußen vor der Tür*, he purged himself of the Beckmann within him. He left Beckmann entangled in the past and the present, while he began to fix his eyes upon the future. Beckmann's brink of despair became Borchert's edge of new possibilities.

Draußen vor der Tür reflects the most critical period of Borchert's brief career. It marks the watershed in his struggle with himself, society, and life. During the year preceding this drama Borchert strove to suppress the feeling of futility and the bitterness welling up in him. However, the quiet melancholy and the calm optimism mirrored in his poetry gradually yielded to outbursts of despair together with desperately insistent avowals of hope.

This peculiar discord is already very much in evidence in *Die Hundebblume*, which was written in the winter of 1945-46 and is the first of Borchert's major tales. The prisoner, who is Borchert himself, is tormented by fear, possessed by an irrational hatred for his fellow inmates, and sick with hopelessness. His loneliness, helplessness, and his hunger for love are suddenly dispelled by the little dandelion which he manages to pluck surreptitiously while exercising in the prison yard. For a moment, this token of life transforms his despair into elation, and in a feverish sort of euphoria, he experiences a pagan-like oneness with nature.

This dissonance reaches its climax in *Gespräch über den Dächern*. Borchert's skeptic spokesman now screams his protest and his despair. We are abandoned to the darkness and to the uncertain, to loneliness and to sorrow, to mockery and to fear, to sobbing and to bellowing. We are lost in our forest of walls, façades, iron, and cement. We wander about in faceless, heartless, and nameless crowds. Death sits in our bones, our dissolution is at hand, and we can only laugh in our utter helplessness.

We are nothing more than algae in the stream of time. Our life, our love, and even our pain is accidental. We are the victims of chance, and this chance is called God. This protracted cacophony of anger and panic suddenly becomes a short but passionate assertion of hope. The unexpected will surely happen. A new tomorrow must be on the threshold. Release is certainly imminent. Perhaps the answer to the enigma of human existence is finally forthcoming.

In *Generation ohne Abschied*, Borchert again lists himself among life's damned. He belongs to the tired, the hungry, and the intimidated, to those incontinent youths who have no ties with the past, who are homeless, and who know no God, who have lost their bearings, and who wander restlessly through life tormented by the transience of human experience. Borchert's liturgy of despair ends abruptly on an urgent note of hope. This lost generation is perhaps the beginning of a better tomorrow, of new life, new love, and new laughter.

But no miracle was about to take place, and as the months passed Borchert became progressively more despondent. His intense reassertion of hope in his paean to the Elbe seems only to have been a last futile gesture. By late autumn, 1946, Borchert's voice of hope had lost all its forcefulness and conviction. In *Draußen vor der Tür*, the attempts of *der Andere*, the eternal optimist in each man's breast, to counter Beckmann's philosophy of despair are utterly ineffectual. He tries to chide and to lure Beckmann back into life with observations which are as specious as they are hackneyed: life has its ups and downs; times will change; man is good; truth will prevail. This traditional optimism has become too bromidic for Beckmann. He argues hope into silence.

Until the close of 1946 Borchert clung to traditional hopes and suffered the corresponding traditional despair. He had looked forward to a utopia of tomorrow. He had continued, secretly and despite his growing skepticism, to expect things of a personal God. And he had not really stopped hoping to derive some comfort from the sort of optimistic philosophy propounded by *der Andere*. In *Draußen vor der Tür*, the last vestiges of these traditional illusory hopes are dispelled, and Beckmann is left in despair. But Borchert was astute enough to recognize that Beckmann's helpless despair was only another traditional attitude, another rather common illusion which had to be overcome if life was to go on. And life had to go on for Borchert. When he purged himself of the Beckmann within him, he finally severed his ties with the last of his major illusions from the past and fixed his eyes soberly on the future.

Having taken stock of himself, of society, and of life, Borchert now proceeded to come to terms with all three. This he managed to do by gradually achieving an attitude both consistent with his humanitarian ideals and compatible with life. During the few months Borchert was still to live, he experienced a decided transformation. In his prose fol-

lowing *Draußen vor der Tür*, he continues to number himself among the dissonant, the restless, and the lonely, and life is still a bitter and brutal experience for him, but his anger, hatred, bitterness, and fear slowly abate. He gradually reconciles himself to his lot, and becomes more tolerant of his fellow man. Malevolence and accusations yield to compassion. Concern for others supplants self-pity. Borchert now ceases his quarrel with a personal God and embraces an immanent deity.

The final stage of this transformation is reflected in *Das ist unser Manifest*, written a few months before Borchert's death. In *Gespräch über den Dächern* Borchert had wondered whether man was not his own victim. In *Draußen vor der Tür* he had suggested that man was life's victim. In *Das ist unser Manifest* he is convinced that man can be his own salvation. Borchert is now as intent upon life as he had been upon death. He continues to call himself a *Neinsager*, but helpless despair has now become a new, unyielding despair. He insists that he is still a nihilist, but his nihilism has become a form-seeking nihilism; a nihilism that disparages the present, but looks hopefully to the future. This future, however, can be assured only if man is willing to live by truth, and if an all-encompassing love becomes his manifesto.

Borchert had won his battle with life, only to succumb to death shortly thereafter.



TWO UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL

GEORGE C. SCHOOLFIELD
Duke University

A good many recent German authors have come to know Scandinavia in one way or another; some — Dauthendey, Rilke, Tucholsky, Brecht, Schaper, and Hans Henny Jahnn — have even resided in the North. Hugo von Hofmannsthal, good Austrian that he was, never dreamed of exchanging Rodaun for an aurora borealis; he visited Scandinavia only to lecture in Oslo and Stockholm (in December, 1916),¹ and, except for the Swedish trappings in *Das Bergwerk zu Falun*, taken at second hand from Hoffmann, there is nothing particularly Nordic in his works. He has no Dano-Swedish spooks of *Malte Laurids Brigge's* sort, nor does he presume to improve upon a fine Lagerlöf tale, as Hauptmann did in *Winterballade*.²

Nevertheless, Hofmannsthal, in the belief that he understood the nature of the South Swedish reading public, wrote at least two newspaper articles for that group. The first of the articles, "Der Ersatz für die Träume" ("Ersättning för drömmar"), came out in Malmö's *Sydsvenska Dagbladet Snällposten* on Sunday, April 10, 1921; the second, "Blick auf den geistigen Zustand Europas" ("Europas andliga tillstånd just nu"), appeared in SDS on Sunday, February 19, 1922.³ Then the readers of *Sydsvenskan* saw no more of Hofmannsthal's work in the pages of their paper, although the editors, in the introduction to "Ersättning för drömmar," had hinted at an entire series of articles: "SDS today has the pleasure of being able to publish in its columns an essay composed especially for this newspaper by Austria's great poet and author, Hugo von Hofmannsthal. In this essay, 'Surrogate for Dreams,' he gives an original interpretation of the role which the cinema plays in modern intellectual and emotional life. Thanks to an agreement reached with Herr von Hof-

¹ Bernhard Blume, in "A Source of Hofmannsthal's 'Aufzeichnungen zu Reden in Skandinavien,'" LN (March, 1955), 157-165, has shown what Gundolf contributed (and did not contribute) to Hofmannsthal's Scandinavian lectures.

² But Hofmannsthal has been a model for a character in a Swedish play, Bertil Malmberg's *Excellensen*. See Ernst Alker, "Hofmannsthal as the Hero of a Swedish Drama," GLL (July, 1951), 298-300.

³ See Hofmannsthal, *Gesammelte Werke: Prosa IV* (Frankfurt a.M., 1955), 44-50 and 75-80, for the German originals. The Swedish translations, incidentally, do not catch all of Hofmannsthal's nuances. "Blick auf den geistigen Zustand Europas" closes, for example, with: "Goethes letztes Wort aber von seinen heute noch festgeschlossenen Lippen abzulesen, wird erst einer späteren Generation, von uns abstammenden, uns unanalysierbaren Menschen gegeben sein: diese werden sich vielleicht 'die letzten Europäer' nennen. Für uns wäre der Name verfrüht." The translator wishes to "extract" ("avlocka") Goethe's last words, and Hofmannsthal's future men turn out to be not unanalyzable but a generation "about which we can know nothing" ("om vilken vi intet kunna veta"). And the last sentence, instead of keeping its rather sinister ambiguity ("Für uns wäre der Name verfrüht"), comes blurring out: "We certainly cannot" ("Vi kunna det förvisso icke").

mannsthal, we also hope to be able in the future to delight our circle of readers as often as possible with fruits of the brilliant author's pen."

The agreement had been reached between Hofmannsthal and Claes Lindskog (1870-1954), Professor of Greek Language and Literature at Lund, and, since the 1890's, an advisory associate of SDS. (After his retirement from academic life in 1935, the indefatigable Lindskog became the chief editor of SDS, holding the post for eleven years.⁴) Perhaps Lindskog had met Hofmannsthal during the latter's brief stop in Lund in 1916, when the poet found the portal of the Lund cathedral to be a "Verbindung eines lombardischen Löwen mit nordischem Drachen";⁵ at any event, Lindskog, seeking a new star for his already refulgent "cultural page" in SDS, contacted Hofmannsthal through the agency of one Herr Lago-Lengquist, a Swede resident in Vienna. Shortly, Lindskog received a gracious letter⁶ from the poet, who was, no doubt, in somewhat straitened circumstances as a result of the Austrian inflation:

Rodaun bei Wien, 21. März 1921

Sehr geehrter Herr Professor,

Herr Lago-Lengquist übermittelte mir die freundliche Nachricht, daß Sie Ihre Bereitwilligkeit erklärt haben, mehrmals im Jahr ein Feuilleton aus meiner Feder im *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* zu publizieren, wenn dasselbe für das Publikum der großen südschwedischen Zeitung geeignet wäre. Herr Lago-Lengquist hatte zugleich die Freundlichkeit, mir über die soziale Zusammensetzung dieses Publikums Angaben zu machen, welche mir zeigen, daß dieses Publikum dem von Oesterreich (ich meine das vorwiegend agriculturale Oesterreich, außerhalb von Wien) nicht unverwandt ist, wie ich ja auch an einem Aufenthalt in Schweden im Jahre 1917 [sic], viel mich sympatisch berührende Übereinstimmung mit uns Oesterreichern bemerkt habe. Ich habe mich nun auf eine Form besonnen, welche einem solchen Publikum, wie ich hoffe, genehm sein könnte. Es ist die Form von "kleinen Betrachtungen" oder kurzen Essays, welche gar keine bestimmte literarische Voraussetzung haben. Ich würde in dieser Form Gegenstände aller Art behandeln, an typische Vorkommnisse des europäischen Lebens anknüpfen, manchmal von einer Anekdote ausgehen, manchmal von einer Redensart und mich in nichts von dem

⁴ Lindskog, who knew how to make good use of his time outside the classroom, was also, from 1921 until 1940, a member of the Swedish diet, and, during 1928-30, a cabinet minister. He made the Teubner critical edition of Plutarch's *Lives*, translated Plato and Herodotus into Swedish, wrote a number of popular-scientific works on Greek culture, and, six years before his death, brought out a large history of SDS: *Sydsvenska dagbladet 100 år: ett sekel speglar i en tidning*. In it he does not mention Hofmannsthal's association with the paper.

⁵ Hofmannsthal, *Gesammelte Werke: Prosa III* (Frankfurt a. M., 1952), 350.

⁶ This and the following letter are in the Lindskog Collection of the Lund University Library. The collection unfortunately does not include the "Schnitzler-Würdigung" which Hofmannsthal mentions in his second letter. Thanks are due to Professor Herbert Steiner, Hofmannsthal's literary executor, and the Lund University Library for permission to print the letters here.

entfernen, was einem durchschnittlichen Leser jener oben angedeuteten halb ländlichen halb städtischen Schicht faßlich und wie ich hoffe interessant sein könnte. Es würde mich ganz außerordentlich freuen, Ihnen etwas zu bieten, was Sie nicht nur aus Freundlichkeit und einem europäischen bekanntem [sic] Namen zu Liebe nehmen, sondern was auch wirklich im S. D. an seinem Platz ist.

Ich erlaube mir auch das Materielle zu berühren. Sie waren so freundlich mir ein Honorar von 150 Kronen per Feuilleton zu bieten, und dabei ist natürlich ein umfangreiches Feuilleton gemeint, von etwa 200 bis 250 Zeilen. Mein Ehrgeiz ist aber gerade, diese kleinen Betrachtungen recht knapp zu schreiben, ich möchte es Ihnen daher in der Form anbieten, daß Sie immer je zwei als ein Feuilleton rechnen, oder mit anderen Worten, daß Sie mir die einzelne mit der Hälfte des vereinbarten Honorars bezahlen, also mit 75 schwedischen Kronen. Es ist mir dann natürlich gleichgültig, ob Sie es für richtig finden, immer je zwei zugleich als ein Feuilleton zu bringen, oder jede Betrachtung für sich in einem beliebigen Abstand. Ich darf Sie vielleicht um die große Freundlichkeit bitten, mir den Empfang dieses Briefes und dieser ersten Sendung von zwei Betrachtungen durch ein paar Zeilen zu bestätigen. Falls Sie mir schwedisch schreiben wollen, so finde ich hier Freunde, die mir Ihren Brief übersetzen können. Das Honorar kann mir durch einen Scheck auf eine schwedische Bank bequem zugehen.

Ich bin mit sehr großem Danke für ihre mir wohltuende Freundlichkeit, sehr geehrter Herr Professor, Ihr Ihnen in besonderer Hochschätzung

ergebener

Hugo von Hofmannsthal

The two articles which accompanied the letter are presumably those which Lindskog later published. Why did Lindskog fail to pursue the matter? Both because of contemporary Swedish interest in things Austrian (the ex-emperor Karl was often in Swedish headlines just then) and of the attractive financial conditions gallantly offered by Hofmannsthal, it should seem that Lindskog would have been very eager to get still more items from his noted contributor. However, Lindskog apparently was not eager; and when, a year later, Hofmannsthal offered SDS an evaluation of Schnitzler, designed to appear on the dramatist's sixtieth birthday (May 15, 1922), the article either arrived too late for inclusion in the birthday-page which SDS gave Schnitzler, or was not taken for some other reason:

Rodaun bei Wien, am 8. V. 22.

Sehr geehrter Herr Professor,

Zu Ende Mai wird in Deutschland und Oesterreich der Geburtstag Artur Schnitzlers gefeiert, und da ich weiß, daß Schnitzler auch in Schweden sehr bekannt ist, so habe ich diese kurze Würdigung für Sie verfaßt, und hoffe, daß sie Ihnen willkommen sein wird. Ich habe sonst

für keine deutsche oder europäische Zeitung etwas über Schnitzler geschrieben mit Ausnahme von zwanzig Zeilen in die [sic] Festnummer der Fischerschen Rundschau, die aber mit dem für Sie geschriebenen sich nicht berühren.

Ich empfehle mich Ihnen aufs Freundlichste

Hugo von Hofmannsthal

An urbane man, Lindskog may not have wished to bother the poet with reminders of his promise. Or he may not have been altogether satisfied with the two feuilletons he had received in March, 1921. Hofmannsthal's notion that *Sydsvenskan's* public resembled the Austrian provincial populace did not offer the soundest basis for a series of essays: Malmö had known intellectual ferment long before Anders Österling praised its "vision of weekday gray . . . which gave me joy in work" ("Städerna vid sundet"), and the citizens of Lund, the most avid readers and sharpest critics of *Sydsvenskan's* cultural page, liked to say that Malmö played a mere Piraeus to their Athens. It must have seemed to Lindskog that a brisker wind blew across Skåne's plain than in Green Styria and the lands above and below the Enns. Hofmannsthal, of course, was not to blame for the opinions which his informant, Herr Lago-Lengquist, had given him. And one suspects that Lago-Lengquist's innocent villainy stemmed from a local patriotism as fierce as Lindskog's own. Had Lago-Lengquist been born in Stockholm's "intellectual dustbin" (the terminology belongs to the Scanian poet, Ole Hansson)? Or (still worse) had he studied in Uppsala, a university notoriously envious of its younger and lovelier sister?



CHARACTERIZATION IN THE NIBELUNGENLIED

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The new and profound insights into human behavior which have been developed by modern psychology might, if properly applied, lead us both to understand and appreciate better than before the art of characterization in early literature. A reappraisal following this approach would assume that the human mind during the historical period has undergone few if any changes and that many authors possess intuitive insights into human behavior comparable to modern scientific discoveries in this field. Conversely, an investigation based on these precepts requires that we shed any preconceived ideas concerning a past era and that we consider the characters found in earlier fiction as though they were contemporaries.

The medieval period is a case in point. It has frequently been either denounced as the Dark Ages, the epitome of superstition and ignorance, or it has been glorified as the prototype of the Romantic age, filled with dashing knights, innocent princesses, pious monks, and honest burghers. Modern scholarship has gone a long way in providing us with a realistic understanding of this era and in making it meaningful for us. Yet there are aspects of medieval literature that so far have eluded our full comprehension.

The efforts of generations of German philologists to develop a workable interpretive approach for their best known medieval epic, the *Nibelungenlied*, may serve as the example. Here we have a literary theme that apparently received its main stimuli from two originally separate settings, the defeat of the Burgundians by the Huns in 437, and the intrigues and feuds in the Franconian royal family resulting in the assassination of King Sigibert in 575 and the execution of Queen Brunichild in 613. The stories of these events merged into one fable, which in the course of several centuries absorbed additional historical elements as well as a few supernatural features. This theme forms the basis for the *Nibelungenlied*, written by an unidentified Austrian or Bavarian author and eventually forgotten.

The *Nibelungenlied* itself was not rediscovered until the middle of the eighteenth century, when scholars found several manuscript versions. For several decades it received scant notice, and it was not until the German Romantic movement that it became generally known again. At the same time, German philologists, influenced by Romantic concepts about folk literature, in particular by the belief that epic works could only grow naturally or "create themselves" (*sich selbst zu dichten*), began to atomize the *Nibelungenlied* into what they believed to be its original component parts. Although subsequent scholarship established that the epic was the work of one author, the original tendencies to idealize its characters and to glorify its setting continued to influence German

readers and philologists, and the *Nibelungenlied* retained the elevated status of a national epic, expounding what were considered to be typical German heroic virtues.

The problem before us is to understand the peculiar role of this epic, which was designed to be neither history nor fiction. The *Nibelungenlied* appears at a point in the literary development of a people when, having little capacity for accepting a fictitious plot of this magnitude, they still insist that the fable should appear real. This age did not look upon epic as a figment of the imagination, but as an account of actual events, and it accepted the magic aspects of the plot with no more hesitation than its modern counterpart will overlook unrealistic elements in contemporary fiction. Since the epic is first of all a good story with human appeal, the supernatural features in the fable provide it with a special charm and force.

It is assumed therefore that the epic writer in developing his plot is bound by a certain factual framework which his audience expects him to observe. Apparently there is little opportunity for him to make an original contribution: however while being restricted to minor changes in the plot the author may provide a deeper understanding of the characters and their motivation. It seems that primitive audiences tolerate major changes in the characterization quite readily. A writer grafting his set of new characterizations on the old plot of an epic must however, proceed with caution, as he cannot usually render a running commentary of his own on how he conceives the motivation of the characters. He must rely mostly on recasting major dialogues and on adding incidental conversations and monologues. To the writer of the *Nibelungenlied*, who used this technique with great skill, characterization was not a device to add more color to his presentation; it was his only way of giving meaning to a fable whose mythological and historical setting he was neither able nor willing to accept as real.

* * *

The writer of the *Nibelungenlied* places a woman, the Burgundian Princess Kriemhild, at the center of the plot, recounting the development of her personality from early womanhood to her death through a portrayal of passion, intrigue, and violence. He skillfully employs the opening scene to indicate this theme, and in particular to lay the foundations for the characterization of Kriemhild by giving the reader a glimpse of the emotional potentialities of the heroine. The epic begins with Kriemhild relating to her widowed mother Ute a violent dream about two eagles killing a falcon she had raised. And when her mother tells her that the falcon of her dream stands for a man, the young princess bursts out saying, "Why talk to me about man, dear mother mine? I want to be forever without the love of a knight. I want to stay beautiful like this until my death, so that man's love shall never bring me trouble."

A modern reader encountering such an opening scene in a contem-

porary play or novel would readily accept it as an initial characterization of the heroine's violent streak. Scholars have established this falcon scene as an original contribution of the unknown author of the *Nibelungenlied*. Proceeding, however, from the assumption that the Kriemhild of the first part of the epic is a heroic character, in this instance over-idealized good, and from the misdirected criticism that dreams cannot foretell the future, they have denied this scene any place in the fable, looking upon it primarily as a poetic device to forewarn the reader of the ultimate tragic ending. If critics concede to the author any attempt at characterization through this scene, they cite it as additional evidence for their preconceived notions of Kriemhild's "innocence." What could be more innocent than a girl abhorring marriage?

This opening scene not only serves as the cornerstone for the characterization of the heroine, but also as an essential part of the plot, since it is Kriemhild's hostile attitude towards marriage that brings Siegfried into the story. The scene shifts from Worms, Kriemhild's home, to Xanten, some 200 miles down the Rhine, where young Prince Siegfried has just been knighted. Immediately, he announces that he wants no other than Kriemhild for his wife, the princess who has turned down so many suitors, and that to this end he would use force, if necessary. Two traits of Siegfried's stand out from this scene: first the strong attraction he feels for the girl who he knows abhors marriage, and secondly his willingness to use force for personal rather than political purposes. The poet underscores the negative nature of these traits by having his parents vigorously attempt to dissuade him.

Siegfried takes no heed of his parents' advice and on his arrival in Worms proceeds, without indicating his real motive, to challenge the Burgundians to combat. They easily dissuade him from this folly and receive him as a guest. The poet uses this scene to characterize the leading personalities at the Burgundian court. Gunther, the ruling king, relying on others for advice, appears to be weak. Thus his brother Gernot does most of the dissuading of Siegfried. Hagen, a Burgundian vassal and their best mind, shows his knowledge of the world by correctly identifying Siegfried — without ever having seen him — and by advising the court of Siegfried's three sources of exceptional power, his control of the *Nibelungen* treasure, the magic cap that may render him invisible, and his personal invulnerability, gained through his bath in the dragon's blood. It is on the basis of this advance information, that the Burgundians decide to be conciliatory to Siegfried.

Siegfried accepts the Burgundian invitation, suddenly shedding his threatening attitude, and endeavors to conceal his real motive for his trip. The plot does not appear to move on, as Siegfried spends a year as a guest of the Burgundians without even seeing Kriemhild. He then almost singlehanded defeats the invading Saxons and on his return reports to Kriemhild. Yet the lengthy fable serves to introduce gradually the com-

plex nature of Siegfried's character. His bravery in combat, his generosity towards the defeated enemy, and his willingness to help his hosts are apparent; less noticeable is his ignorance of the ways of the world, in particular his inability to hide his motives and his shyness towards Kriemhild.

The plot moves on when Gunther hears about Brunhild, the virgin queen endowed with magic strength, who is willing to marry only that man who can defeat her in a contest of force. Siegfried counsels against the project, but when Gunther asks for help, agrees to go along and in return obtains Gunther's promise of Kriemhild's hand. Siegfried leads Gunther to Brunhild's castle, explains his presence to Brunhild by posing as one of Gunther's vassals, and uses both stealth and force to subdue Brunhild for Gunther.

Siegfried's first deception leads to another. On their return, a double wedding, Gunther-Brunhild and Siegfried-Kriemhild, is celebrated in Worms. But Brunhild, who will lose her magic strength upon consummation of her marriage, asks her husband why he permits his sister to be married to one of the vassals, and when Gunther lies clumsily, she denies him consummation. Gunther calls again on Siegfried's help, who during the following night protected by his magic cap forces Brunhild to submit to Gunther. Siegfried does not touch her himself, but with the same thoughtlessness that characterizes his role in this episode he secretly takes Brunhild's belt and ring and later gives them to Kriemhild. This scene has been difficult to interpret, since it apparently falls outside the heroic theme of the epic. A recent and competent commentator (Panzer, *Das Nibelungenlied*, p. 340) rightly rejects any attempt to style this episode a comic interlude, but offers as the only explanation the theory that it represents a relatively unsuccessful adaptation of a fairytale motif. While undoubtedly the magic elements predominate in these Brunhild scenes, the problem is not one of literary precedent but of their role in what the author conceives to be the major theme of the epic. For this we have to shed any *a priori* schematic characterizations of an "innocent" Kriemhild, a "heroic" Siegfried, or a "proud" Brunhild and only consider the author's consistent effort to develop his major characters. Then Brunhild emerges as a woman with a highly developed social sensitivity, while Siegfried's character exhibits streaks of brutality and folly. And when the author refers to him during his bedroom exploits as a brave man (*kuene man*), such characterization is probably best understood as irony.

Shortly after the double wedding, Siegfried and Kriemhild leave for their home in Xanten. They are described as very much in love with each other, and this the author does not consider inconsistent with Kriemhild's previous dislike of marriage. However, before she leaves Worms, Kriemhild insists on her share of the Burgundian kingdom, but being opposed in this by her two older brothers and her husband, settles for 32 maidens and 500 men, who follow her to Xanten. This scene is of hardly

any significance to the plot, but it brings out for the first time Kriemhild's rather tenacious attitude toward property, particularly her inheritance. The author passes quickly over the next ten years. Siegfried takes over the government of his father's kingdom, and both couples settle down to family life. After those many years, the plot is slowly revived by Brunhild, who is still wondering why Siegfried never performs the services of a vassal.

Perhaps the motivation by which the thread of the story is picked up again is somewhat tenuous but at this point Kriemhild emerges as the chief character of the epic. It is also the first time that one can discern two versions in describing the main characters. The B* text, as it is called, reflecting apparently the original version, maintains the complexity of the leading personalities that has been noted so far, while the C* text is the work of a subsequent editor of the original version. C* is stylistically much smoother, more factual in approach, and in particular simplifies the chief characters, primarily by adding or changing a few key passages. Wherever the original author had achieved characterization through indirect means, as for instance dreams or revealing incidents, the editor responsible for C* did not recognize their full meaning and therefore retained them, although they contradicted this simplified approach. The reason for this editorial policy lies in his inability to understand fully the subtle technique employed by the first author. The tendency of C* to divide the cast into "good" and "bad" characters serves as an interesting contrast to the complex concepts of the original author.

Brunhild manages to persuade Gunther to invite Siegfried and Kriemhild to Worms, and according to the B* version Brunhild, while concerned about Siegfried's status, was not consciously hostile to him. C*, however, describes Brunhild in two added lines as being driven by the devil to wait for an opportunity to show Kriemhild's inferior status. C* thus tries to establish a patent cause for the subsequent quarrel of the two queens, an incident that triggers the tragic turn of the plot. Any interpretation of this scene and any assessment of the responsibility for the fight will vary, depending on whether one derives it from a preconceived characterization of the two queens, i.e. Kriemhild's innocence and Brunhild's pride, or whether one tries to understand the author's effort to develop the devious depths of Kriemhild's personality. The author depicts the queens sitting together, and has Kriemhild think of her husband and tactlessly remark that he should rule all these lands. The ensuing argument gives Brunhild the opportunity to make the point — which had been bothering her for so long — that Siegfried had been passed off to her as Gunther's vassal. The queens part unreconciled after agreeing that their status should be decided by which one gained precedence in entering the church. Kriemhild returns with the ring and belt that Siegfried had taken from Brunhild, gaining precedence by dumbfounding Brunhild through accusing her of having been Siegfried's concubine. After

the service, she finishes Brunhild off by showing her ring and belt to substantiate her accusation.

The scene brings out the worst in the two women. In particular Kriemhild was far from the truth in asserting that Siegfried should rule Gunther and that he had been intimate with Brunhild. On the other hand, Brunhild's rejoinder that Siegfried had claimed to owe Gunther service was only erroneous to the extent that she had been elaborately deceived. Moreover, she exposes the absurdity of Kriemhild's claim by her simple counterquery: Why did you let him love me, if he was yours? Finally, the reactions of the men should serve as an additional clue as to how the author wants this scene assessed: The Burgundians rally around their queen, while Siegfried beats his wife for her part in the quarrel.

From this point on the action moves swiftly, with each character falling into place. Immediately, Brunhild, deeply hurt, complains to Gunther, who calls Siegfried to account. Siegfried in turn offers to swear that he never claimed to have had intimacies with Brunhild, and the Burgundians accept this explanation for the time being. Then Hagen, who had had his eye on Siegfried's gold (i.e. power) for some time, injects himself and begins to plot and to urge Siegfried's death. Gunther, weakly keeping the details of Brunhild's wedding to himself, is ineffective in making a case for Siegfried. Moreover, when Kriemhild continues to provoke the Burgundians by playing the first lady at court, Gunther can only argue how dangerous it is to attack Siegfried. Then, Hagen steps in with a ready-made plot to murder Siegfried, and Gunther gives in and permits him to proceed.

Hagen's plot relies on Siegfried's well-known helpfulness. Gunther pretends to be depressed, is asked by Siegfried what the trouble is, and in reply makes up a story about a threatening attack by the Saxons. Siegfried, of course, offers to help, and they prepare for war. Hagen takes the opportunity to call Kriemhild to take leave and finds her distraught over her quarrel with Brunhild. He pretends that reconciliation can be effected and offers to be of service. Kriemhild thereupon asks him to protect Siegfried in battle, revealing the secret of his vulnerability. She tells him about the spot on her husband's back that was not covered by the dragon's blood with its magic protective powers and on Hagen's request sews a mark on Siegfried's clothes to indicate the place. After that, Hagen has little trouble in having the alleged war changed to a hunt and tricking Siegfried into a position where he can kill him.

The characterization of Kriemhild that emerges from this scene is similar to that in the quarrel incident with Brunhild. Kriemhild's inability to perceive Hagen's intentions is closely related to her tactlessness towards Brunhild. Moreover, in both instances, she panics, by flying into wild accusations in the quarrel scene and then later by revealing to Hagen Siegfried's secret. But both scenes have a deeper meaning, which the author skillfully reveals by having Kriemhild gradually become aware

of the implications of her actions. As she had been distraught over her quarrel with Brunhild, she shows an increasing uneasiness about her deal with Hagen. Thus when Siegfried leaves for the last time she tries to keep him from going by telling him of two dreams she had about his being killed by two bears and two mountains. Her tensions move rapidly to a climax: Siegfried's body is placed in front of her door. A chamberlain tells her merely that the corpse of a knight has been found there. Kriemhild, not having been informed of her husband's death, realizes the truth in a flash, crying out that it is Siegfried, and that Hagen has killed him on Brunhild's advice. Thus Kriemhild, having no other information about Hagen's intentions than what he had told her and having received no news about Siegfried's fate, suddenly becomes aware of the murder plot and by necessity of her participation in it.

The seeds of Siegfried's destruction must therefore in part be sought in Kriemhild's character. It was she who had the violent dream as a young girl, who believed that marriage would ruin her, and who more recently had maneuvered her husband into an impossible position by accusing her hostess and sister-in-law of having been his mistress. And it was she who ultimately made Siegfried's death possible by betraying his vulnerable spot. Kriemhild's participation in the murder plot makes it impossible to describe her role in the second half of the epic (where she manages to have her three brothers, Hagen, and a host of Burgundians killed) as primarily motivated by revenge for Siegfried's death. The difficulty with the revenge theme was first recognized by the editor of C*: In the earlier B* version neither Gernot nor Giselher, her youngest brother, is a party to the murder plot, and both stay home from the hunt, but yet Kriemhild has them killed in the end. C* harmonizes this apparent contradiction by adding a verse stating that they had known of the plot.

The author of B*, having excluded the revenge motive, proceeds to supply his own rationale for Kriemhild's role in the destruction of her brothers. Again, as in the first half of the epic, the author develops slowly and by indirect means the deeper motivations in Kriemhild's character, until during the final scenes he lets the true violence of her personality burst forth in full force. Moreover, he provides additional depth in his literary treatment by contrasting her character with that of her brother Giselher, who had always loyally supported her and whom she also has killed.

The author begins the second part of the epic by making Kriemhild evade revenge. Thus by saying that the occasion is not opportune she prevents her father-in-law from avenging his son's death. She refuses to go home with her son and father-in-law and stays at Worms, thus separating herself voluntarily from her husband's kinfolk on whom she normally would have relied for revenge. And when at Hagen's instigation Gernot and Giselher mediate between her and her oldest brother,

she even forgives Gunther his role in Siegfried's death. The editor of C*, however, in accordance with the revenge theme, has Kriemhild do so under duress.

Hagen kills Siegfried not for personal reasons, but because he considers his death necessary for reasons of state, one of which is the acquisition of Siegfried's gold. It is with this in mind that he promotes the reconciliation, as a first step towards persuading Kriemhild to bring the gold to Worms. Once the gold has arrived, Hagen has no difficulty in finding a pretext to take it away from her over the ineffective protests of her three brothers. He then sinks it in the Rhine. With this grievance, the author supplies Kriemhild with an overriding motive to take revenge on Hagen.

Kriemhild has stayed for some thirteen years with the Burgundians when Etzel, king of the Huns, asks her in marriage. Her brothers are for the match, while Hagen opposes it and Kriemhild, the devout Christian, decides to accept the offer of a pagan, although not without misgivings. She wants the money and the power of her new position and on the other hand is afraid her reputation would suffer through her marriage to a pagan; however, she feels that this disadvantage perhaps might be made up if she could avenge Siegfried's murder. In the end, however, the thought that Etzel could replace the gold that Hagen had taken from her seems to turn the scales in favor of accepting the offer.

The author proceeds then to enlarge on the conflicting pressures bearing upon the heroine after her arrival at Etzel's court. Thus during the wedding she thinks constantly of Siegfried; then after she has strengthened her position at court, she compares it favorably with that she had as a widow with the Burgundians; her mood changes again, and she thinks of Hagen and wants revenge; again her thoughts wander back to Worms, and she dreams of holding hands with her brother Giselher and kissing him at all hours; all the time, however, she is unhappy, blaming Hagen and Gunther for having made her marry a heathen; but she is also quite clear that with the power at her disposal she can destroy Hagen, and thus cries for her friends at home, while at the same time she cannot wait for her day of revenge. In the end, she persuades Etzel to invite the Burgundians for a visit.

The remainder of the epic describes the annihilation of the Burgundians at Etzel's court through Kriemhild's instigation. There is no question that the issue lies between her and Hagen; but the author goes beyond simply narrating the plot and he describes her motivation in depth. He depicts Kriemhild as being driven by a desire to recover the gold that Hagen had taken from her; this is what she asks him for upon his arrival at Etzel's court; it is for this that she kills her brother Gunther; and she finally kills Hagen when she realizes that he will not reveal where the gold is hidden in the Rhine. The editor responsible for C* attempts at various places to weaken this motivation by adding lines which

introduce revenge for Siegfried's death as an additional motive.

Not only does the author of B* describe various attempts of Kriemhild to start the fight with the Burgundians, but he has her make sacrifices that go beyond human limits. Thus Kriemhild, in addition to risking the life of her young son (who is killed in the initial stages of the combat), also pays for Hagen's life with the lives of many of Etzel's followers. And here again the author responsible for C* feels that he has to diminish the heroine's ferocity and adds a verse indicating that Kriemhild had not expected such losses.

But the author of B* employs another subtle device to bring out her fierceness. He makes Kriemhild also responsible for the death of her brother Giselher, whose recent betrothal he tenderly describes. It was Giselher who had stood by her after her husband's death and of whom she dreamt so fondly. Upon the arrival of the Burgundians, Kriemhild greets her brothers, but kisses only Giselher. Hagen, the realist, reacts by tightening his helmet in disgust, because he must have known that she was capable of sacrificing even her favorite brother.

In the final scene, the events surrounding Kriemhild's death should leave little doubt as to how the author wants her character to be understood. Hagen, in telling her that he had tricked her into having Gunther killed, calls her a she-devil (*vālandinne*) to her face. Kriemhild thereupon kills Hagen with her own hands, and when Etzel denounces her for this murder, the renowned Hildebrant kills her, saying that he is avenging Hagen.

* * *

The author's attempt to provide the major figures of the epic with an entirely new characterization not only supplies a coherent and realistic motivation, but also a theme for the epic, i.e. that man carries the seed of his destruction in his character. Only one person is immune to this rule, and that is Rumolt, a minor figure among the Burgundians, who does not join the last fatal trip because he sees no reason why he should not enjoy life in Worms while he can. This theme of man's eventual self-destruction is heightened by several contrasts, such as the virility ascribed to Siegfried, the tenderness surrounding Giselher's engagement, and the elaborate descriptions of courtly state and glamour. Perhaps even the magic powers enjoyed by Siegfried tend to enhance his weaknesses of character. Intermingled with these and contrasting with other scenes is a melancholy mood of resignation. If strength cannot save Siegfried, nor true love and faith prevent Giselher's fate, then neither education nor a religious life seems to be effective against one's own folly. Thus the author brings out that Kriemhild is a regular churchgoer and attached to Christian principles. Similarly, he relates that Siegfried received a careful education. One may even detect an undertone of irony in some of these scenes, an irony that blends into the pessimistic tenor of the epic.

What remains, is to assess the degree of the author's success in his

attempt at characterization. His problem was that he was essentially bound by a combination of plots whose motivations were no longer valid in terms of twelfth-century society. While the *Nibelungenlied* is not a historical source and while only some of its characters and scenes are, indirectly, related to historical events, the core of its plot and in particular the motivations of the earlier fable clearly reflect the milieu of Merovingian dynastic strife. The lax marital customs of this Franconian royal family engendered a fierce struggle among women competing for the same king. Thus King Chilperich I (561-584) had a succession of wives, one of whom, Queen Fredegunde (died 597), caused a rival to be murdered. History also relates that a foreign princess put up a strong resistance to being married to Chilperich because she wanted no part of this sorry mess. The conflicts between various branches of the Merovingian dynasty abound in murder, assassination, intrigue, and treachery. Thus Fredegunde had King Sigibert (561-575) assassinated during a hunt. It was also customary for the Franconian kings to keep a treasure of gold as a means for maintaining their political influence. The author could not fall back on these original motivations which were no longer understood in his day, but instead he developed the characterization in depth and supplied a new rationale for the plot. The author's degree of success should not so much be measured in terms of the few loose ends that his new approach left (such as Siegfried's unexplained prior acquaintance with Brunhild and her country), but by the fact that his interpretation has been accepted as consistent with the traditions of this epic.

However, the brilliant insight which the author shows in respect to characterization strikes us at points as distinctly modern or perhaps universal in application. We have no means of knowing whether this knowledge was pragmatic, reflecting only observation, or whether it extended into the realm of theory. The general assumption that the author was a cleric and the pessimistic outlook of the epic seem to indicate that the direction of his thought was rather eschatological than scientific. It would therefore be premature to label the devices he employs with psychological labels, such as dream analysis, ambivalence, subconscious, and the like. It is, however, clear, that this knowledge was not general at that time, as the changes introduced by the editor responsible for C* indicate.

In reappraising the *Nibelungenlied*, we should keep in mind that we are dealing with fiction. The epic is not designed to provide a scientific discourse or to record a case history. It should be primarily judged as a piece of art, but to the extent that it reflects life the realism and depth relate directly to its literary qualities. A better understanding of the technique employed by the author in this respect should result in a higher estimation of this epic, even though (or perhaps because) this approach dulls the glamour of a primarily "heroic" interpretation.

GERMAN PLAYS IN AMERICAN COLLEGES: 1955-58

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The aim of the survey resulting in the following table was the same as that of two earlier surveys, on which reports are contained in *Monatshefte* (May, 1951; December, 1955). 146 questionnaires were sent out, of which 79 were returned. Again it may be assumed that few, if any, of the schools not replying or not included in the survey offered plays. Of those replying, 42, including some with large German enrollments, had no theatrical activity whatsoever; 34 reported plays, a few reported Christmas plays or skits, and some reported activities in all categories.

Not many great names are represented in the list of authors. Although Schiller's name appears three times, only one complete original play of his was presented. Goethe's name also crops up three times, and again only one of his great plays is put on the stage complete. Kleist makes one appearance, Büchner five with two plays. Among the earlier authors Wilhelmi and his *Einer muß heiraten* seem to be as popular today as they were a hundred years ago with German-American amateur stages. Among later and present-day authors Schnitzler and Goetz are better represented than any others. Zuckmayer and Brecht are also not entirely absent.

Schools along the Pacific coast saw a goodly number of performances, though not by student groups. The *Deutsches Theater des Kulturkreises Salt Lake City* has traveled to the west coast every year since 1955 to give plays. Their repertoire and the schools where they appeared were as follows:

1955-56	<i>Der Fischbecker Wandteppich</i> (Given at Univ. of California, Berkeley, and San Francisco State College)	Manfred Hausmann
1956-57	<i>Elektra</i> (Given at Univ. of California, Berkeley; San Francisco State College; Univ. of Washington; Univ. of British Columbia)	Gerhart Hauptmann
	<i>Der Fischbecker Wandteppich</i> (Given at Stanford Univ.; Berkeley; Univ. of Washington)	Manfred Hausmann
1957-58	<i>Das Glück der Narren</i> (Given at Army Language School, Monterey; Univ. of Oregon; Univ. of Washington)	Peter Bürki
	<i>Sechs Einakter: Die jüdische Frau</i> <i>Draußen vor der Tür</i> <i>Wovon wir leben und</i> <i>woran wir sterben</i> <i>Das Zimmer</i> <i>Das Opfer</i> <i>Die Scheidung</i> (Given at Stanford; Berkeley; San Francisco State College; Reed College; Univ. of Washington)	Bertolt Brecht Wolfgang Borchert Herbert Eisenreich Frank Thiess Manfred Hausmann Frank Thiess

However, the liveliest stage activity by student ensembles, as during the previous period, took place in Texas. Not only were plays given at the University of Texas, at Texas Technological College, and at Southern Methodist University, but the ensemble of Southern Methodist also went on the road to present plays shown on its own campus. In 1956 it played before the Texas Association of German Students on the campus of Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas; in 1957 a performance was given at Rice Institute; and in 1958 at Baylor University. This activity could well set an example for other states, especially in view of rising enrollments in language departments.

The following schools reported plays in the German language:

Adelphi College	1954-55 <i>Der fliegende Geheimmrat</i>	Curt Goetz
	1955-56 <i>Nachtbeleuchtung</i>	Curt Goetz
	1956-57 <i>Der Bauer und der Teufel</i>	nach Hans Sachs
	1957-58 <i>Die Prinzessin auf der Erbse</i>	nach H. C. Andersen
Baldwin-Wallace College	1955-56 <i>Der gerade Weg der beste</i>	Kotzebue
	1956-57 <i>Einer muß heiraten</i>	Wilhelmi
Berea College	1957-58 <i>Die Maschine</i>	Kogermas-Miller
Boston Univ.	1954-55 <i>Leonce und Lena</i>	Büchner
	1955-56 "Auerbachs Keller" (<i>Urfaust</i>)	Goethe
Brigham Young Univ.	1954-55 <i>Einer muß heiraten</i>	Wilhelmi
	1955-56 <i>Der Hochzeitsabend</i>	?
Bryn Mawr College (jointly with Haverford College)	1957-58 <i>Leonce und Lena</i>	Büchner
Univ. of Buffalo	1954-55 <i>Nathan der Weise</i>	Lessing
	1955-56 <i>Jedermann</i>	Hofmannsthal
Univ. of Cincinnati	1954-55 <i>Clavigo</i>	Goethe
Dartmouth College	1956-57 <i>Goethe</i>	Egon Friedell
	1957-58 <i>Szene aus Urfaust</i>	Goethe
	<i>Goethe</i>	Friedell
Dennison Univ.	1954-55 <i>Woyzeck</i>	Büchner
	1957-58 <i>Der fahrende Schüler im Paradies</i>	Hans Sachs
	<i>Morgen bis Mittag</i>	Kaiser
Harvard Univ.	1954-55 <i>Die letzten Masken</i>	Schnitzler
	<i>Der grüne Kakadu</i>	Schnitzler
Univ. of Illinois	1956-57 <i>Eigensinn</i>	Roderich Benedix
Indiana Univ.	1956-57 <i>Die tote Tante</i>	Curt Goetz
	1957-58 <i>Die tote Tante</i>	Curt Goetz
Kent State Univ.	1956-57 <i>Eigensinn</i>	Roderich Benedix
	1957-58 <i>Einer muß heiraten</i>	Wilhelmi
Macalester College	1955-56 <i>Abschiedssouper</i>	Schnitzler
	1956-57 <i>Abschiedssouper</i>	Schnitzler
Middlebury College (Summer School)	1955- <i>Peter Squentz</i>	Gryphius
	1956 <i>Das große Welttheater</i>	Hofmannsthal
	1957 <i>Lumpazivagabundus</i>	Raimund
	1958 <i>Leonce und Lena</i>	Büchner

Univ. of Minnesota	1954-55	<i>Der zerbrochene Krug</i>	Kleist
	1955-56	<i>Drei ehrenwerte Herren</i>	Weissenborn
	1956-57	<i>Gas I</i>	Kaiser
	1957-58	<i>Der kaukasische Kreidekreis</i>	Brecht
Mühlenberg College	1956-57	<i>Der fahrende Schüler im Paradies</i>	Hans Sachs
	1955-56	<i>Das Worpsweder Hirtenspiel</i>	Manfred Hausmann
New York Univ. (Washington Square)	1956-57	<i>Des ew'gen Vaters einig Kind</i>	?
	1954-55	<i>Jedermann</i>	Hofmannsthal
Univ. of N. Carolina	1957-58	<i>Anatol (Szenen)</i>	Schnitzler
	1956-57	<i>Der Mensch von Unterwegs</i>	Goes
Oberlin College		<i>Jedermann</i>	Hofmannsthal
	1957-58	<i>Die fröhliche Christnachtlitanei</i>	Goes
	1957-58	<i>Die Prüfung</i>	?
Univ. of Oklahoma		<i>Der Knopf</i>	J. Rosen
	1954-55	<i>Jagderfolge</i>	nach Benedix
Penn. State Univ.	1956-57	<i>Ein Knopf</i>	Julius Rosen
		<i>Die kleinen Verwandten</i>	Ludwig Thoma
Univ. of Penn.	1954-55	<i>Abschiedssouper</i>	Schnitzler
Rutgers State Univ. (with Douglass College)	1955-56	<i>Der Teufel mit dem alten Weib</i>	Hans Sachs
	1954-55	<i>Nachtbeleuchtung</i>	Kurt Goetz
Southern Methodist Univ.	1955-56	<i>Die Welt außer Rang und Banden</i>	Fr. v. Sallet
	1956-57	<i>Der Herr Monsieur</i>	Hanns Johst
	1957-58	<i>Die kleinen Verwandten</i>	Thoma
	1957-58	<i>Furcht und Elend des dritten Reiches (Szenen)</i>	Brecht
Texas Tech. College	1954-55	<i>Einer muß heiraten</i>	Wilhelmi
	1955-56	<i>Liebe im Schlaf</i>	Unger
	1956-57	<i>Juana</i>	Georg Kaiser
		<i>Episode</i>	Schnitzler
	1957-58	<i>Die Unschuldige</i>	Heinrich Mann
Univ. of Texas		<i>Der tapfere Cassian</i>	Schnitzler
	1954-55	<i>Turandot</i>	Schiller
		<i>Jery und Bäteli</i>	Goethe
	1955-56	<i>Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag</i>	nach Mörike
		<i>Zum großen Wurstel</i>	Schnitzler
Univ. of Utah	1956-57	<i>Die Freier</i>	Eichendorff
	1957-58	<i>Katharina Knie</i>	Zuckmayer
	1954-55	<i>Flachsmann als Erzieher</i>	Otto Ernst
Wellesley College	1955-56	<i>Der Biberpelz</i>	Hauptmann
	1956-57	<i>Der Hauptmann von Köpenick</i>	Zuckmayer
	1957-58	<i>Peter Squentz</i>	Gryphius
Williams College	1954-55	<i>Das Herbergsuchen</i>	Otto Bruder
	1956-57	<i>Leonce und Lena</i>	Büchner
	1957-58	<i>Prinzessin Turandot</i>	Hildesheimer
	1957-58	<i>Abschiedssouper</i>	Schnitzler

Univ. of Wisconsin	1954-55	<i>Das Haus in Montevideo</i>	Curt Goetz
	1955-56	<i>Der Kammersänger</i>	Wedekind
	1956-57	<i>Das Mädel aus der Vorstadt</i>	Nestroy
	1957-58	<i>Kabale und Liebe</i>	Schiller
College of Wooster	1954-55	<i>Wilhelm Tell</i> (Szenen)	Schiller
	1957-58	Two plays	Hans Sachs
<i>Christmas Plays:</i> Univ. of Cincinnati; Univ. of Kansas; Macalester College; New York Univ. (Washington Square); Univ. of Pittsburgh; Temple Univ.; Wellesley College.			
<i>Puppet Plays and Skits:</i> Kent State Univ.; Lawrence College; Macalester College; Stanford Univ.; Texas Technological College; College of Wooster.			



The Chicago Folklore Prize

The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures is pleased that interest in the Chicago Folklore Prize has continued high with many excellent entries submitted. As a result it is awarding for 1959 a first prize and a second prize. First prize: *The Ballad of Heer Halewijn: Its Forms and Variations in Western Europe*, by Professor Holger O. Nygard of the University of Tennessee; second prize: *Folklore of the Dragonfly, a Linguistic Approach*, by Professor Eden E. Sarot of Seton Hall University, N.J.

The Chicago Folklore Prize is awarded annually for an important contribution to the study of folklore. Students, candidates for higher degrees, and established scholars may compete for the Prize. The contribution may be a monograph, thesis, essay, article, or a collection of materials. No restriction is placed on the contestant's choice of topic or selection of material. Sufficient postage should be included if the contestant wishes to have his material returned. The material must be submitted before April 15, 1960, to the Chairman of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Chicago, 1050 East 59th St., Chicago 37, Illinois. The Prize is a cash award of about \$50.00.

University of Chicago.

—George J. Metcalf

BOOK REVIEWS

Goethe's *Faust*. A Literary Analysis.

By Stuart Atkins. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958. xi and 290 pp. \$6.00.

The subtitle "a literary analysis" is also a program and a definition of method. Professor Atkins has limited himself strictly to the text of *Faust* without side glances at other works of Goethe, without biographical information, and without references to the growth of the work itself. His treatment is emphatically "literary" also in that he not only deals with the work as a self-contained, cohesive tragedy, but also does not enter into philosophical speculation or wander down the many inviting byways of metaphysical commentary that have lured other commentators. "If *Faust* expresses what seem to be recognizable philosophical or religious truths, it is only because great poetry is a truthful reflection of human experience" (p. 3). Professor Atkins has also resolutely refused to annotate Goethe's sources and has wisely refrained from trying to prove in his footnotes that he has read all the books which Goethe had read. One of the charms of the book lies in the lack of apparatus. The book is a book about the text of *Faust* as living literature. "What is said in *Faust*, and what the technique of its saying contributes to *Faust's* effectiveness as poetic statement, are the only themes of the following pages" (p. vi). In addition Atkins considers *Faust* primarily a tragedy of a character. By putting his emphasis on the dramatic action he is able to analyze the work without becoming lost in the forests of symbolism or straying into the endless paths of allegory. "My reading of *Faust* has convinced me that it is basically a drama of character, and not, as has too long been assumed, an unhappy mixture of character drama and allegorical pageantry" (vi).

"The most suitable frame of reference is, I think, the double context suggested, or even demanded, by the title of the play itself: the traditions of Western thought already definitely associated with the figure of Faust in the mind of Goethe and of the public for which he first wrote, and the larger group of traditions of European literature which relate to the concept of Tragedy" (p. vi). This sentence too contains a program, and one which Atkins has successfully fulfilled. One of the major contributions of this study is the fact that the conventions of the period of *Faust* are constantly noted. The theater of Calderon, the Baroque theater, the Greek comedy, and the conventional forms and techniques contemporary with Goethe are referred to in the running commentary. Traditional motifs and practices are always identified as such, so that the reader may assess the degree to which Goethe was able to fill old forms with new and personal meaning or achieve a satiric effect. While this approach is by no means original with Atkins, it is nevertheless surprising to what degree the dramatic function of certain passages is revealed in a new light by the intelligent use of this technique. And it is the dramatic function with which Atkins is primarily concerned.

Generally he presents his own interpretations without polemics against views at variance with his, quietly developing his own consistent presentation. Once, in a footnote to page 274, he cannot resist pointing out how misreadings arise.

Faust is for Atkins a "self-contained poetic statement" (p. 273) and "remarkably close-knit text which . . . communicates a highly complex poetic vision without ever giving the effect of skeletal bareness" (p. 277). In supporting his view of the unity of *Faust* Atkins not only develops the dramatic function of each successive scene, but also in his summaries at the ends of his chapters reviews the progress of *Faust* and the broader course of the dramatic action. In these summaries as well as in the running commentary frequent and often very revealing parallels with earlier passages are pointed out. Echoes of previous scenes, variations on earlier themes, and emphasis on Goethe's technique of "parallelistic variation" give substance to the treatment of *Faust* as an integrated whole. One of the methods employed is the comparison of verse forms. By making careful note of the function of various verse forms Atkins is not only able to identify echoes of earlier passages but is also able to demonstrate the dramatic purpose of the scene under discussion. Interesting examples of this method may be noted i.a. on pages 243, 245, 246; and — perhaps overdone — page 265. By careful attention to what kind of language is used and in what tone as well as form it is couched an interpretation is given which does not rely solely on the resolution of difficult symbols.

In addition to being sensitive to the tragedy and high purpose of *Faust*, Atkins also has made one of his major contributions in pointing out the satiric elements and the high comedy sometimes overlooked, especially in Part II. One of his main emphases in Part II is on the elements of dream-play and dream-projection. In one of the few passages with a polemic tone he remarks: "In consequence, for instance, critics who know perfectly well that Faust's classical Walpurgis Night is a phantasmagoria easily forget its dramatic premise and unconsciously begin to treat Helen or Phorkyas or Euphron as autonomous *dramatis personae*, with the result that the most important scenes of *Faust* imperceptibly cease to be parts of the Tragedy of Faust and become simply masque-like passages of allegorical-didactic poetry interspersed with disparate dramatic and lyric moments" (pp. 273-4). Only once does he apparently falter in his perceptive analysis of the dream elements and play-within-play sections of Part II, when, page 191, he seems to forget his earlier thesis that the "Mothers" are an invention of Mephistopheles.

The self-imposed lack of references to Goethe's other works and to Goethe's development as a poet means that his analysis will supplement rather than replace other commentaries on *Faust*. Other views of *Faust*, especially of Part II, are admittedly necessary to supplement the rigidly "literary" view of Atkins' study, and many of the special studies have not become outmoded through this book. But this "literary analysis" of *Faust* is to date the most complete, convincing, and useful total view of the work that has been published.

Amherst College.

—Murray B. Peppard

Deutsche Wortgeschichte.

Herausgegeben von Friedrich Maurer und Friedrich Stroh. Zweite, neu bearbeitete Auflage 1. Bd., 4-5. Lfg. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1958.

Fascicles 4 and 5 conclude the first volume of *Deutsche Wortgeschichte*. The first part was reviewed in *Monatshefte* L, 274-78.

Emil Öhmann's *Der romanische Einfluß auf das Deutsche* is an entirely new contribution, an interlude, one might call it, which undertakes to examine a stage in the development of the vocabulary from without rather than from within. Of special pertinence to the *Wortgeschichte* theme is the placing of many important loanwords within the German social structure of the time, which throws into relief the expected differences between French and Italian in their effect on the language. The chapter as a whole often seems a bit diffuse, especially since the histories of some words are given several times; some parts, such as the relatively peripheral one dealing with the dialectal origin of Italian loanwords, are somewhat repetitious.

The chapter *Humanistische Strömungen* in the old edition was little more than a brief running commentary on the meanings of a number of words which first appeared or began to be used differently at this time. The present *Humanistische Strömungen*, by Hans-Friedrich Rosenfeld, is in general decidedly a change for the better, though one occasionally wishes for some of the conciseness of the former. Rosenfeld's approach to his subject matter appears to be guided by the aim of writing a detailed but essentially traditional chapter out of the history of the German language, rather than by the more interpretative line followed by certain of his co-contributors. The first twenty pages or so, for instance, for all their excellence as an introduction to the role of Humanism in the formation of the modern vocabulary, actually contribute little to the establishing of connections between changes in word meanings and intellectual currents; at some points (e.g. 373) one expects in vain some discussion of the cultural significance of new words like *hochsinnig*, *standhaft*, *ästimieren*, *gravitatisch*, *selbständig*, *liberal*. An approach that consistently views the modern standard vocabulary as the end-point and goal even results in an apology for considering the often highly significant short-lived words: "Aber es sollen hier die wieder geschwundenen Worte nicht gehäuft werden" (377). More words should have been accorded the excellent treatment bestowed on *Deutschland* (386 f.). Much of the treatment of Latin influence (347-352) is something less than completely convincing. When *-atio* and *-entia* simply drop their endings to become *-atz* and *-enz*, *-tas* is borrowed as *-tät* and verbs in *-ieren* multiply, should not at least the possibility of French influence be mentioned? Once, to be sure, the almost grudging admission is made that the spread of *predikant* is "vielleicht nicht ohne französischen Einfluß" (349). In this same section *buchstabieren*, *hausieren*, *sackisieren* and others, with their German heads and French tails, are discussed as part of the Latin influence. By and large, though, this chapter does contribute a very full picture of the additions to many areas of the German vocabulary, and the author's handling of the material inspires confidence.

Johannes Erben's *Luther und die neuhochdeutsche Schriftsprache* is a welcome replacement of the old chapter of the same name, which was learned but rather indigestible because of its reluctance to use concrete examples. Erben's contribution is a distinguished study bringing out clearly and in detail the background (largely E. Middle German) and influence of the language of Luther himself. The chapter concludes with a summarization of Luther's contributions to the vocabulary according to types (local words, form changes, alterations of meaning, innovations) and a candid evaluation of Luther's role, which give one the feeling—as does the entire chapter—that this is the way a much-discussed topic should most reasonably be treated.

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—William Z. Shetter

Der deutsche Wortschatz nach Sachgruppen.

Von Franz Dornseiff. Fünfte Auflage mit alphabetischem Generalregister. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1959. 166+922 S. DM 38.00.

"Ich halte die Betrachtungsrichtung der Bezeichnungslehre . . . für die zukunftsreiche, und deshalb habe ich das vorliegende Buch geschrieben" (39). "Hier soll in sachlicher Ordnung eine Führung durch die Bezeichnungsmittel einer Sprache gegeben werden" (29). "Mit Hilfe solcher Synonymendarstellungen wird man die Ausdrucksmöglichkeiten verschiedener Sprachen planmäßig vergleichen können" (57). An ambition to compare in detail the vocabularies of Greek and German led Dornseiff to adopt and begin defending a linguistic position—based, it would seem, on his essentially Greek view of a static world of reason reflected in ever-changing words—which was being warmly debated in Germany thirty years ago, and resulted in the publication in 1933 of the *Wortschatz*. Dornseiff's challenge was accepted, and the appearance of his work occasioned spirited discussion of the standpoints of *Bezeichnungslehre* versus *Bedeutungslehre*. Among the best critical discussions are those of Ammann in *AfdAlt.* 53:5-12 and Kronasser in his *Handbuch der Semasiologie* 69-77. Dornseiff's stand that attention need be focused only on changes in designation of a particular concept was bound to bring him into conflict with the influential group around Jost Trier at Münster and its preoccupation with the semantic field. This approach was defended vigorously by G. Kalicinski in *ZfdPh.* 62:166-171; then in a more than equally vigorously worded article "Probleme des Bedeutungswandels" in *ZfdPh.* 63:119-138 Dornseiff replied by first denying the very existence of the problem which formed his title and then presenting a detailed exposition of his "anti-semantic" position. Dornseiff has, as a matter of fact, neglected few opportunities to reply to his critics, and the unsparing tone of many of his remarks can hardly have improved relations with his colleagues.

Though this is not the time to discuss from the beginning a work which appeared a quarter of a century ago, it does seem doubtful in retrospect that Dornseiff's work, for all its wealth of interesting material, could ever lead to fruitful results in comparing languages. His frame of reference is—perhaps more than he himself realizes—thoroughly European, not only in its concentration on the isolable word as the bearer of meaning but even more in the underlying assumption that the basic

semantic structure of all languages is the same, so that we need merely to fill the various rubrics of the universal semantic framework with the vocabulary items of each language in turn. Dornseiff's suggestion, "Auch für Fragebogen, wenn es sich darum handelt, bisher unbekannte Sprachen aufzunehmen, dürfte sich die Einstellung empfehlen," (10) makes one wonder what would happen if his seemingly logical sections *Raum* (No. 3) and *Zeit* (No. 6) were presented to Hopi Indians, to whom, we are told, this familiar distinction is unintelligible.

The main body of the text has remained substantially unchanged in the successive editions; both text and the enormous bibliography have *Nachträge*. The fact that a fifth edition has become necessary would seem to vindicate Dornseiff's amusingly candid "Wenn alle Rätselrater und -raterinnen mein Buch kaufen, kann ich bald eine verbesserte Auflage machen. Die Spezialisten für altlateinische Sprachgeschichte können mir diesen Wunsch nicht verwirklichen" (14). The most significant new feature is the inclusion for the first time of a complete or nearly complete index, especially important since fully half the words occur in more than one section, some in a great many. An index to a work such as this has obvious practical uses, though it is also tempting to reflect upon some of its less immediately practical potentialities. What do we find when we look at all the places the index lists for the occurrence of a word, say *Rasse*? We find, in the various sections, its close neighbors (= near synonyms), in this case *unvermischt*, *frei von*; *Linie*, *Sippe*, *Sonderart*; *Varietät*, *Wesen*, *Individualität*; *Seele*, *Innenleben*, *Richtung*, *Typ*; *Nation*, *Nationalität*, *Volk*, *Vaterland*, *Kultur*, *Volkstum*; *Amt*, *Rang*, *Stand*, *Würde*, *Kaste*, among many others. Taken together, a reasonably complete suggestion of the area occupied by the word. This may, to be sure, tell us nothing we did not already know about the ways in which Germans use and have used *Rasse*, though we are not generally so vividly aware of all the sides the word has. It is perhaps here, if anywhere, that comparison of languages on the basis of compilations like Dornseiff's — provided of course they were made by native speakers — could be the most illuminating. Proceeding from complete indexes, which would in effect be a key to denotative and connotative values of each word, we would see instantly and clearly the relative likeness or unlikeness of any two words we chose to compare.

There are still numerous misprints, few of which will cause confusion, not even the section heading *Organe* for *Orange* (225). Names misspelled are *Saareste*, *Setälä* (74), *Boebtingk* (80) and, forgivably, Catalan *Butlletí* (95).

University of Wisconsin.

—W. Z. Shetter

NEW TEXTBOOKS

Functional German.

By Max S. Kirch and Heinz Moenkemeyer. New York: American Book Co., 1959. xxx + 304 pp., 16 plates. \$4.25.

In thirty "Units" this introductory book follows with laudable consistency a method which the authors feel will ensure "important and satisfying results." Each of the thirty units is organized into five parts. First, certain "units of speech and vocabulary" (approximately forty items in each unit) are studied and read aloud, then applied in oral drills to the point of automatic response. The same materials are then presented in a number of "model sentences" together with the English translation. These sentences are to be memorized until the German can be given from the English. The pattern of each sentence is then further developed in variation drills. The third section of the unit is devoted to grammatical analysis of the materials already learned and drilled. A fourth section provides somewhat more involved English sentences for further practice in oral and written translation. A concluding section combines what has been previously learned into a connected passage for practice in reading, followed by German questions on the passage to be answered in German.

As to the assumption on which the book is based, one might argue that the basic unit of speech is not the individual word or phrase but a complete utterance, and that it is reversing the natural procedure to learn words and phrases first in isolation, then in complete sentences. However, in view of the speed with which the authors incorporate their "units of speech and vocabulary" into complete sentences and the thorough drills provided, this objection is not serious.

The grammatical presentation in books stressing the functional oral approach appears to be necessarily piecemeal and somewhat helter-skelter. For example, topics such as the declension of adjectives, the conjugation of weak verbs, the use of prepositions are here scattered over several units. This undoubtedly has certain advantages, but there is an equally indisputable loss in not presenting larger, coherent units of grammar. Ideally, this might be accomplished in review units, or even in an appendix (the appendix of this book provides a pronunciation guide, paradigms, and a list of irregular verbs). More serious, perhaps, is the tendency of this piecemeal approach to present vital points of grammar side by side with relatively unimportant minutiae, with no indication to the student that one point is more important than the other. Very questionable is the omission from the grammatical discussion of such indispensable prepositions as *gegen*, *ohne*, *seit*, *von*. Certainly it would have been more important to include the usual prepositions than, for example, to list the names of European countries (p. 64).

The exercise materials are carefully worked out and should be highly effective. The authors have not always managed to avoid artificiality ("Learn English and German, Klara and Richard," p. 105), but on the whole have done a thorough and creditable job. In the hands of a competent teacher this book should be most effective in imparting an elementary speaking knowledge of German.

A Comprehensive German Course for College Students.

By John W. Kurtz and Heinz Politzer. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1959. xx + 377 pp.

This beginner's book covers the basic grammar in 17 chapters. An additional chapter introduces the student to *Fraktur*. The novelty of the book lies in the

character and arrangement of the reading selections. By providing English translations of the basic texts (i.e., introductory reading passages) in the first eight lessons, the authors have made it possible to use relatively difficult material from the start. In the basic texts of two of the later lessons and in the supplementary "readings" in each chapter, several representative works of modern literature are presented, either in the original form or edited to some extent. Among the authors included are Borchert, Hofmannsthal, Schnitzler, Hesse, Brecht, etc. Marginal glosses facilitate the reading of these passages. The inclusion of these selections as the "purpose and goal" of the entire book reflects the authors' conviction "that the development of literary taste should be fostered by teachers and textbooks even in the elementary language classroom" (p.xvi).

The grammar presentation appears to be generally clear and adequate. Constant comparison with English usage is a commendable feature. The German questions on the basic texts are carefully formulated. Otherwise the exercise material is somewhat scant, and most teachers will no doubt wish to supplement it. Very helpful is the section called "Vocabulary Notes" in each lesson, in which various troublesome small points are explained and illustrated. The arrangement of the "Vocabulary Check List" in each chapter and of the "Vocabulary Reviews" after lessons 8 and 17 is very practical. Indication in these reviews of the chapters in which the individual items first appear will be helpful to teachers in constructing examinations.

Effective typography and an almost lavish use of space enhance the appearance of the book. The numerous illustrations are unfortunately not of uniformly high quality. A few minor lapses were noted: page 11 unaccountably omits an explanation of short *ü*; the statement on page xix that Exercise A uniformly consists of questions to be answered in German is not entirely accurate (cf. e.g. lessons 1 and 3); Exercise D on page 43 calls for numerous forms which seem not to have been previously explained (e.g. no.'s 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 12). A grammatical appendix and end vocabulary are provided.

A Review of German: Grammar Practice Based on Selected Texts.

By Sten G. Flygt. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1959. xiv + 258 pp. \$2.90.

At the risk of being misunderstood, we should like to label this text as *unzeitgemäß* in the best sense of the word. It does not cater to the current aural-oral approach to language study (based all too often on trivial materials) but proposes to guide the student to leisurely intellectual penetration into the forest of German grammar as a preparation for advanced reading. The emphasis is not on glib reproduction of casual phrases but on careful analysis and translation of often intricate materials. Intended for students who have completed an elementary grammar and readers, it provides in ten meaty "units" a complete grammar review and intensive study of some 25 pages of difficult German. The ten two or three-page reading selections are without exception thought-provoking and stimulating in content. Some are literary (selections from Chamisso, Hebel, Tieck), some philosophical (Lichtenberg, Schopenhauer), some of general interest (a Mozart letter, selections from Riehl's *Die deutsche Arbeit*, Uexküll's *Das Tropenaquarium*, etc.). Mastery of these difficult passages is made possible for intermediate students by providing each text with an English translation on the opposite page as well as with copious notes. The grammatical discussions based on the selections are leisurely, lucid, and penetrating. No effort is made to reduce complicated topics (e.g. indirect discourse) to simple formulas, but the student who conscientiously follows Professor Flygt's highly literate analysis cannot fail to gain insight into the problems of German grammar. The exercise material, which presupposes intensive study of the reading passage and grammar, is novel and ap-

propriate to the whole tendency of the book, though far removed from the "variation drill" so popular today. A highly welcome feature is the indication after each vocabulary entry of the lesson in which the word first occurs.

Review and Progress in German.

By W. P. Lehmann, H. Rehder, L. R. Shaw, S. N. Werbow. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1959. xiv + 265 pp. \$3.90.

This intermediate book is designed to prepare the student who has mastered the elements of German for more advanced work by drilling him orally in the more complicated vocabulary and grammar problems involved in reading unsimplified texts. It is thus based on the currently widespread conviction "that ability in speaking German is fundamental to whatever ultimate use the individual student desires to make of his knowledge" (p.vii). Each of the 15 lessons consists of four parts: a brief reading passage containing new "patterns," extensive exercise material (mainly variation drills), grammatical and lexical analysis, and a lengthier and more complicated reading passage providing further drill in the new patterns. A 40-page 'Grammatical Appendix' contains a fairly complete statement of the basic facts of grammar plus a section devoted to "The Sounds of German."

The strong points of the book are the exercises, which provide a maximum of drill in a minimum of space, and the grammatical explanations, which are concise and to the point. Particularly welcome are the analyses of word formation and the discussions of such troublesome matters as the distinction between *tun* and *machen*, or *bringen* and *nehmen*. The subject matter of the reading (science fiction, fast cars, the atom bomb, etc.) will not appeal to all. Its justification lies in its functional nature. But why teach such an impossible word as "der Konnaissanceur," (Lesson 7)?

As in all Holt books, typography and makeup are excellent.

Beethoven. Cultural Graded Readers, Alternate Series, IV.

By C. R. Goedsche and W. E. Glaetli. New York: American Book Co., 1959, 78 pp. (47 pp. of text).

Paralleling *Einstein* in the original series, this reader follows the now familiar pattern of the Cultural Graded Readers, introducing at this level the subjunctive, extended adjective constructions, and other complexities of sentence structure. According to the Introduction, the book contains 1004 basic words, of which 755 occurred earlier in the series. The intrinsically interesting subject matter is well handled and should have considerable student appeal. The three previous readers in the Alternate German Series were based on the lives of Schweitzer, Heine, and Thomas Mann.

Deutsche Welt.

By Lore Barbara Foltin. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958. xi + 254 pp. \$2.40.

The author of this reader hopes to provide a bridge from the simple reading found in the usual elementary book to standard German. Fifteen selections, three of them original, the remainder paraphrased from German authors, guide the student by easy stages from the simple to the relatively complex. Among the authors represented in simplified form are Heine (*Harzreise*), Mörike (*Lucie Gelmeroth*), and Hebbel (*Eine Nacht im Jägerhaus*). The final chapter is an account of Goethe's last year in Frankfurt and his early years in Weimar.

The book, which professes to serve the four-fold aim of reading, speaking, understanding, and writing German, is very thoroughly edited. The vocabulary has been restricted to less than 1000 words, each of which occurs at least five times in the reading. Special attention is paid to idioms, a number of which are

singled out to be learned before tackling the individual readings. Superior numbers refer the student to footnote glosses, superior letters to the paragraphs of a section entitled "Reading Aids," in which among other difficulties the "troublesome 'little' words" are treated at considerable length.

The exercises are unusually numerous (frequently as many as 15 to a lesson) and varied. There are German content questions, general questions, pronunciation drills, practice in recognition of cognates, word study problems, English-to-German translations, matching exercises, recognition grammar exercises, and many other types. German-English and English-German end vocabularies are provided.

The book is paper bound and attractively printed, with several illustrations. Brief English introductions are provided for each German author. A special preface gives the student suggestions for effective study.

Reporter in Deutschland, A Reader for Beginners.

By Viola H. Drath and John Winkelman. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1959. xii + 260 + lxxx pp. \$4.20.

An amazing amount of up-to-date information on nearly all facets of German life are packed into this reader. The inevitable fiction of the young American visiting Germany for the first time (in this case a young reporter from the Middle West) is somewhat more plausibly treated than in most books of this type, and the description of his adventures is kept lively despite a marked tendency of his friends and acquaintances to spout facts and statistics. Nineteen chapters, subdivided into convenient shorter sections, give a comprehensive picture of modern Germany with many glimpses into the past. Where so much ground is covered in so brief a compass, a certain superficiality is, of course, inevitable. For the most part the authors have avoided mere enumerations, though one might question, for example, the value of a seven-line sketch of dramatic literature covering Kleist, Büchner, Grillparzer, Hebbel, Brecht, and Zuckmayer (p. 231).

Footnote glosses provide help with grammatical and lexical problems and further factual information. Each chapter is provided with German questions and English-to-German translation exercises. The vocabulary, which, as must be expected in a work of this kind, is fairly large, is carefully prepared, providing by way of novelty indication of long vowels and brief word derivations. The book is illustrated with 128 photographs.

Lebendiges Deutschland.

By H. J. Meessen and Kurt Blohm. New York: Ginn and Co., 1959. 248 pp. \$3.50.

Intended for second-semester college German classes, this reader "seeks to acquaint the American student with the Germany that has emerged since 1945 by presenting typical aspects of the German scene." Unlike some cultural readers, this one is less a travelogue than an analysis of postwar conditions, going into considerable detail in regard to political and economic developments, though the lighter aspects of German life are not ignored. An introductory chapter in geography and recent developments is presented factually. Later chapters present discussions of such problems as reconstruction, living conditions, the refugee question, and student life within a fictional framework. Twelve brief sections, presented as recitations in a German history class, give a skeletal outline of German history from the Teutons to Adenauer.

Footnote glosses furnish the meanings of all words beyond the 1000 most frequent in the MSV. German questions are provided. The book is very attractively printed, with numerous photographs and many maps, charts, and drawings.

Im Wandel der Jahre. Deutsches Lesebuch für Anfänger. Revised.

By Harold von Hofe. New York: Holt, 1959. 274 + xxiv pages. \$4.50.

The revision of Professor von Hofe's popular reader has increased the portion of the book devoted to text and pictures by nearly 30 pages. By glossing the newly added material in the margins, it was possible to retain the end vocabulary of the original edition (1955). At the same time the student's vocabulary problem has been eased by increasing the number of glosses provided for the old material. At one spot (p. 103) a portion of a previous gloss ("under foot"), inadvertently retained in the new edition, may cause puzzlement.

Several pages of very simple reading material have been prefaced to the first chapter to enable use of the book early in the first year course. Chapter 2 (now aptly labeled *Kulturhistorischer Überblick* on page 35, but still *Historischer Überblick* in the Table of Contents) displays numerous changes expanding and clarifying points passed over lightly in the first edition. The alterations noted seemed pertinent and helpful. Chapter 3 (now *Eine Reise durch Deutschland* instead of *Eine Reise vom Hamburg nach München*) and the remaining chapters have been corrected here and there and in some cases slightly expanded. A few changes and some rearrangement of the lavish pictorial material were also noted. The pages devoted to *Fragen* have been increased from eight to ten.

The improved new edition remains one of the most attractive cultural readers available.

Deutsche Hörspiele.

Edited by Herbert W. Reichert. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1959. vii + 266 pp. (c. 212 pages of text). \$2.95.

In this collection Professor Reichert makes available four German radio plays published in 1953 and 1954. The first (*Ich höre Namen*) concerns a man who has the mysterious power of foretelling the death of others — and himself. The second (*Das gnadenbringende Strafgericht*) is a romantic phantasy about the re-education of St. Peter in the spirit of Christmas, the third (*Die Schnapsidee*) a comedy about a busdriver who rebels against routine, and the fourth (*Der öst-westliche Diwan*) a satire on the postwar division of Germany. The interesting and varied content, the dialogue form, and the spirited modern idiom of these plays make them ideally suited for students of conversational German who have progressed beyond the initial stages. The question arises whether it would not be possible to obtain tapes of the original radio performances, thus still further enhancing their usefulness in class and laboratory.

Brief introductions initiate the student into the setting and atmosphere of the play he is about to read. Footnotes assist him over troublesome idiomatic expressions and provide factual information. Each play is also provided with 25 German questions.

Deutsches Literatur-Lesebuch, Third Edition.

By O. S. Fleissner and E. M. Fleissner. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1959. 278 pp. (206 pp. of text.) \$3.00.

The first edition of this reader, which appeared in 1928, sketched in ten chapters the salient facts of German literary history, illustrating major authors and works by brief excerpts or summaries. The present third edition is unchanged except for the omission of a few pages of Wildenbruch and the addition of an eleventh chapter outlining developments from Nietzsche to the present day. Of the 36 pages devoted to "Das zwanzigste Jahrhundert," 26 consist of well-chosen brief selections from Kafka, Rilke, Hesse, Borchert, Brecht, etc. New words in this chapter are glossed at the bottom of the page, and German content questions have been provided.

Zehn Jahrzehnte (1860-1960).

Edited by Frank G. Ryder. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1959. xiii + 200 + xxxix pp. (161 pp. of text). \$2.90.

The format of this reader is distinctive. The ten stories of which it is composed appear on rather small white pages (about 4" x 7") superimposed on outsized (about 8" x 11") light grey pages. It is thus possible for the editor to provide abundant marginal and bottom-of-page glosses and notes without marring the *Druckbild* of the original text.

As the title indicates, the book contains representative selections from ten decades, varying in length from five to fifty pages: Raabe, *Else von der Tanne*; Keller, *Die Jungfrau als Ritter*; Ebner-Eschenbach, *Krambambuli*; Mann, *Tobias Mindernickel*; Rilke, *Cornet*; Kafka, *Das Urteil*; Ernst, *Der geraubte Brief*; Wiechert, *Der Todeskandidat*; Borchert, *Lesebuchgeschichten*; Gaiser, *Fehleisen*. The book thus offers an impressive variety of subjects and styles. Each selection is introduced by a biographical sketch and a thought-provoking analysis. The latter provide an introduction to problems of literary criticism, unusual and very welcome in a book of this type. The annotation appears to be thorough and competent. One might object, however, that in some cases (Ernst, Borchert) the editorial apparatus is more extensive than the German text itself. A separate section provides German questions for each story. A list of strong and irregular verbs and an interesting tabulation of cognates and near-cognates occurring in the stories are appended.

Das Gericht des Meeres.

By Gertrude von le Fort. Edited by Robert O. Röseler. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1959. xii + 79 pp. (29 pp. of text). \$0.95.

Twelfth-century Brittany and the sea between Brittany and England are the setting of this distinguished *Novelle* by one of Germany's foremost Catholic writers. Less remote than the setting is the problem: guilt and expiation by self-sacrifice, reflecting the spiritual situation of thoughtful persons in the closing days of the war, when the story was written (1944).

The editorial novelty of the book lies in the arrangement: the text of the story is printed on the righthand pages, the lefthand pages being reserved for English translations of words, idioms, and difficult constructions, in order to enable the student to read rapidly and with full understanding. An end vocabulary is also provided. The prefatory material includes a brief account of Gertrud von le Fort's work and an introduction into the historical and legendary background of the story. Five pages of German content questions round out the editorial apparatus of the book, which is paper bound and neatly printed.

Nicht nur zur Weihnachtszeit. Der Mann mit den Messern.

By Heinrich Böll. Edited by Dorothea Berger. New York: American Book Co., 1959. vii + 88 pp. (52 pp. of text).

This little reader provides two representative selections from the work of one of Germany's most popular contemporary writers. The tragicomical "Nicht nur zur Weihnachtszeit" (37 pages) describes the postwar disintegration of a German family, its moral fiber weakened by fascism and conflict, the chief symptom — if not the cause — of which is the insistence of gentle Aunt Milla that Christmas Eve be celebrated every evening in the year. More starkly realistic, "Der Mann mit den Messern" (13 pages) — the title refers to a knife-throwing act in a cheap vaudeville theater — conveys a sense of the brutal futility and hopelessness of life in Germany soon after the war.

Footnotes are provided to help the student over major difficulties of language and subject matter. The booklet, which is paper bound, also contains a brief "Foreword" to introduce the student to the author, and the usual end vocabulary.

Viele heißen Kain.

By Alfred Neumann. Edited by Paulene Hadaway Roth. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1958. vii + 140 pp. (106 pp. of text). \$1.90.

The subtitle of this turn-of-the-century murder mystery set against a Belgian background, might well be, in the words of the author, "aus Bruderliebe zum Mörder geworden." The story makes few literary pretensions; its relatively simple, conversational style should lend itself to rapid reading. The symbolism of the title is somewhat nebulous, but the editor provides the Cain and Abel story from the Luther Bible so that the student can draw his own conclusions.

A nine-page section entitled "Aids to Comprehension" offers suggestions for dealing with certain difficult words and constructions, while idioms are translated in footnotes. Paper bound, the book is attractively printed and illustrated with line drawings. A few misprints were noted.

Der Blinde.

By Walter Jens. Edited by Harry Bergholz. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1959. xiii + 163 + xlvi pp. (113 pp. of text).

Though completely different from Schnitzler's *Der blinde Geronimo* in background, conception, and treatment, Jens' postwar Novelle somewhat resembles the earlier work in theme: a blind man learns to overcome his isolation and finds his way back to his fellowmen. In an eleven-page Introduction Professor Bergholz comments at some length on the literary qualities of the work and its various levels of meaning. The unusually extensive 33 pages of *Fragen* provide additional suggestions for interpreting the text.

The editorial apparatus further includes footnote glosses and explanations, a 13-page section of "Reminders concerning certain structural and idiomatic patterns," and the usual German-English vocabulary. The typography is unusually attractive. Only one misprint was noted.

— J. D. W.

Stanford Institute for Secondary School Teachers

Stanford University is planning to hold an Institute for secondary school teachers of German during the summer of 1960 in Germany. The group will fly by chartered airplane on June 19 from New York to Berlin for a week of intensive preparation and orientation. Then it will proceed to Bad Boll near Stuttgart for eight weeks of regular study on the graduate level. Certain weekends will be devoted to obligatory field trips under guidance, others will be at the free disposal of participants. On August 19 the group will be flown back to New York. All regular transportation and subsistence costs will be covered by the stipend of \$75 per week per participant authorized by the NDEA of 1958. For further information, write to Professor B. Q. Morgan, Room 242 Q, Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Vol. LI

December, 1959

No. 7

Two Unpublished Letters of Thomas Mann / Kenneth Oliver	325
Wolfgang Borchert: "Draußen vor der Tür" / Joseph Mileck	328
Two Unpublished Letters of Hugo von Hofmannsthal / George C. Schoolfield	337
Characterization in the Nibelungenlied / Arnold H. Price	341
German Plays in American Colleges: 1955-58 / Hermann E. Rothfuss	351
Book Reviews	355
New Textbooks	360

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February, 1960

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INDEX FOR VOLUME LI, 1959

ARTICLES

	No.	Page
Hugo Bekker		
The Lucifer Motif in the German Drama of the Sixteenth Century	5	237
Erich Berger		
Georges Lukretia-Gedicht	3	121
R. K. Bernard		
Zwei unveröffentlichte Handschriften Grillparzers	4	173
Joseph E. Bourgeois		
Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti's Tribute to Schiller	6	313
Donald G. Daviau		
Stefan Zweig's Victors in Defeat	1	1
Charles Duffy and Don A. Keister		
Mario and the Musician: Two Letters by Thomas Mann	4	190
Martin Dyck		
Novalis' Christian Names	1	31
Walter Gausewitz		
Schillers "Nänie"	6	293
Melitta Gerhard		
Schillers Zielbild der ästhetischen Erziehung und das Wirken Stefan Georges	6	275
Walter Grossmann		
On Freedom and Necessity: Schiller's and Hintze's Reflections on the Historical World	6	283
H. G. Haile		
Thomas Mann und der "Anglizismus"	5	263
Christoph Hering		
Die Überwindung des gegenständlichen Symbolismus in den Gedichten August Stramm's	2	63
Jost Hermand		
Der Knabe Elis: Zum Problem der Existenzstufen bei Georg Trakl	5	225
Frank O. Hirschbach		
Traum und Vision bei Hesse	4	157
William N. Hughes		
Thomas Mann and the Platonic Adulterer	2	75
Kenneth Keeton		
Charlotte, Goethe, and Freiherr von Stein	1	25
Reinhard Lettau		
Rilkes Zyklus "Die Parke"	4	169
L. McGlashan		
A Goethe Reminiscence in Eichendorff	4	177
Joseph Mileck		
Wolfgang Borchert: "Draußen vor der Tür"	7	382
Kenneth Oliver		
Two Unpublished Letters of Thomas Mann	7	325
Heinz Politzer		
Of Time and Doctor Faustus	4	145
Arnold H. Price		
Characterization in the Nibelungenlied	7	341
Siegfried B. Puknat		
Mencken and the Sudermann Case	4	183

	No.	Page
Herbert W. Reichert		
The Present Status of Nietzsche: Nietzsche Literature in the Post-War Era	3	103
Hermann E. Rothfuss		
German Plays in American Colleges: 1955-58	7	351
Frank G. Ryder		
The Design of Hofmannswaldau's "Vergänglichkeit der Schönheit"	3	97
George C. Schoolfield		
Two Unpublished Letters of Hugo von Hofmannsthal	7	337
Sister Mary Frances		
Schiller as Translator: A Study in Technique	6	303
Ursula Thomas		
Heinrich von Kleist and Gotthilf Heinrich Schubert	5	249
Hermann J. Weigand		
Rilke's "Archaischer Torso Apollos"	2	49
Ulrich Weisstein		
Humanism and the Novel: An Introduction to Heinrich Mann's "Henri Quatre"	1	13

BOOK REVIEWS

Richard Alewyn		
Über Hugo von Hofmannsthal / Jost Hermand	4	214
Stuart Atkins		
Goethe's Faust, a Literary Analysis / Murray B. Peppard	7	355
C. F. W. Behl and Felix A. Voigt		
Chronik von Gerhart Hauptmanns Leben und Schaffen / Siegfried F. Müller	2	84
Hedwig von Beit		
Gegensatz und Erneuerung im Märchen, Band II und Registerband / Ernst A. Philippson	6	315
Harold T. Betteridge, ed.		
The New Cassell's German Dictionary / William Z. Shetter	2	89
C. V. Bock		
Quirinus Kuhlmann als Dichter / Curt von Faber du Faur	3	131
Bruno Boesch, ed.		
Deutsche Urkunden des 13. Jahrhunderts / R-M. S. Heffner	3	138
Richard Brinkmann		
Wirklichkeit und Illusion / Felix M. Wassermann	4	207
A Closs and T. P. Williams, eds.		
The Heath Anthology of German Poetry / Werner Vordtriede	4	213
Franz Dornseiff		
Der deutsche Wortschatz nach Sachgruppen / William Z. Shetter	7	358
Curt von Faber du Faur		
German Baroque Literature. A Catalogue of the Collection in the Yale University Library / A. G. de Capua	4	211
Karl Goedeke		
Grundriß zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung (2. Aufl., Bd. 14, Buch 8, Abt. 7, Lfg. 1-3; 3. Aufl., Bd. 14, Abt. 5, Lfg. 1; Neue Folge, Bd. 1, Lfg. 1-2) / Heinrich Henel	4	198
Hans Hajek, ed.		
Das buoch von guoter spise / R-M. S. Heffner	4	218

	No.	Page
Jost Hermand		
Die literarische Formenwelt des Biedermeiers /		
Ulrich Weisstein	2	82
Friedrich Hiebel		
Christian Morgenstern / Martin Dyck	6	317
Arnold Hirsch		
Bürgertum und Barock im deutschen Roman /		
Wayne Wonderley	4	205
Walter Höllerer		
Zwischen Klassik und Moderne / Jost Hermand	2	91
Ernst Jockers		
Mit Goethe, gesammelte Aufsätze / Carl Hammer, Jr.	3	126
Matthijs Jolles		
Goethes Kunstanschauung / Ludwig W. Kahn	3	129
Annedore Leber et al., eds.		
Das Gewissen entscheidet / Gerhard Weiss	1	46
Gerhard Loose		
Ernst Jünger, Gestalt und Werk / Murray B. Peppard	3	134
Gerhard Lutz, ed.		
Volkskunde / Harold von Hofe	4	220
F. Maurer and F. Stroh, eds.		
Deutsche Wortgeschichte (2. Aufl., 1. Bd., Lfg. 4-5) /		
William Z. Shetter	7	357
Erna Merker		
Wörterbuch zu Goethes Werther / Ignace Feuerlicht	4	219
Joseph Mileck		
Hermann Hesse and His Critics / Murray B. Peppard	6	320
Ostdeutsche Monatshefte / R. O. Röseler	4	210
Hans Pyritz et al.		
Goethe-Bibliographie / Heinrich Henel	4	198
C. E. Reed and L. W. Seifert		
A Linguistic Atlas of Pennsylvania German /		
A. F. Buffington	2	93
Walter A. Reichart		
Washington Irving and Germany / Arthur R. Schultz	4	205
N. Rich and M. H. Fisher, eds.		
The Holstein Papers II: The Holstein Diaries / H. C. Meyer	3	140
A. Schirokauer and T. P. Thornton, eds.		
Höfische Tischzuchten. / Grobianische Tischzuchten /		
R-M. S. Heffner	3	137
Guido Schmidlin		
Hölderlins Ode: Ein Dichterberuf / P. M. Mitchell	4	216
Karin Schneider, ed.		
Thüring von Ringoltingen: Melusine / R-M. S. Heffner	1	46
P. A. Shelley et al., eds.		
Anglo-German and American-German Crosscurrents, Vol. I. /		
Henry A. Pochmann	3	132
Margaret Sinden		
Gerhart Hauptmann: The Prose Plays / Siegfried H. Muller	3	135
Eli Sobel, ed.		
Alte Neue Zeitung: A Sixteenth-Century Collection of		
Fables / George F. Jones	4	215
Keith Spalding		
An Historical Dictionary of German Figurative Usage,		
Fascicle 9 / R-M. S. Heffner	2	88

	No.	Page
Steffen Steffensen		
Rilke und Skandinavien / Gertrude L. Schuelke	6	319
Melvin E. Valk		
Word-Index to Gottfried's Tristan / W. P. Lehmann	2	81
H. Watenphul and H. Krefeld, eds.		
Die Gedichte des Archipoeta / R-M. S. Heffner	6	322
Stanley N. Werbow, ed.		
Martin von Amberg: Der Gewissenspiegel /		
R-M. S. Heffner	4	218
John Winkelman		
The Poetic Style of Erich Kästner / Ian C. Loran	3	139
Eva C. Wunderlich		
Geschichten vom lieben Gott von Rainer Maria Rilke /		
Frank Wood	4	209

TEXTBOOK REVIEWS

Dorothea Berger, ed.		
Heinrich Böll, "Nicht nur zur Weihnachtszeit," "Der Mann mit den Messern"	7	365
H. Bergholz, ed.		
Walter Jens, "Der Blinde"	7	366
V. Draht and J. Winkelman		
Reporter in Deutschland, A Reader for Beginners	7	363
O. S. and E. M. Fleissner		
Deutsches Literatur-Lesebuch, Third Edition	7	364
Sten Flygt		
A Review of German	7	361
Lore Foltin		
Deutsche Welt	7	362
C. R. Goedsche and W. E. Glaettli		
Beethoven (Cultural Graded Readers, Alternate Series, IV)	7	362
Harold von Hofe		
Im Wandel der Jahre, Revised Edition	7	364
M. Kirch and H. Moenkemeyer		
Functional German	7	360
J. W. Kurtz and H. Politzer		
A Comprehensive German Course for College Students	7	360
W. P. Lehmann, H. Rehder, L. Shaw, and S. Werbow		
Review and Progress in German	7	362
H. Meessen and K. Blohm		
Lebendiges Deutschland	7	363
H. W. Reichert		
Deutsche Hörspiele	7	364
R. O. Röseler, ed.		
Gertrud von Le Fort, "Das Gericht des Meeres"	7	365
P. H. Roth, ed.		
Alfred Neumann, "Viele heißen Kain"	7	366
F. G. Ryder		
Zehn Jahrzehnte	7	365

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VOL. LI

DECEMBER, 1959

NO. 7

Published at the UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, Madison, Wisconsin

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Published under the auspices of the Department of German at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.; issued monthly with the exception of the months of June, July, August, September, and bimonthly April and May.

The annual subscription price is \$3.50; all foreign subscriptions 50 cents extra; single copies 50 cents.

Correspondence, manuscripts submitted for publication, and books for review should be sent to the editor: J. D. Workman, Bascom Hall, University of Wisconsin, Madison 6, Wisconsin.

Subscriptions, payments, and applications for advertising space should be addressed: *Monatshefte*, Bascom Hall, University of Wisconsin, Madison 6, Wis.

Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the *MLA Style Sheet*, copies of which may be obtained from the Treasurer of the MLA (6 Washington Square North, New York 3, N. Y.).



For Table of Contents Turn to Page 367

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